## EXHIBIT 16

Page 1

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY
CIVIL ACTION NO. 13-7871 (FLW)(TJB)

KIMBERLY COLE, ALAN COLE, JAMES MONICA, LINDA BOYD,
MICHAEL MCMAHON, RAY SMINKEY, JAMES MEDDERS, JUDY
MEDDERS, ROBERT PEPERNO, SARAH PEPERNO, AND KELLY MCCOY,
ON BEHALF OF THEMSELVES AND ALL OTHERS SIMILARLY
SITUATED,
PLAINTIFFS

V.

NIBCO, INC., DEFENDANT

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE OF TENNESSEE
NASHVILLE DIVISION
DISTRICT JUDGE WAVERLY D. CRENSHAW, JR.
MAGISTRATE JUDGE BARBARA D. HOLMES
CASE NO. 3:15-cv-1124

CHAD MEADOW, JOHN AND SUSAN PLISKO AND KENNETH MCLAUGHLIN, INDIVIDUALLY AND ON BEHALF OF ALL OTHERS SIMILARY SITUATED, PLAINTIFFS

V.

NIBCO, INC., DEFENDANT

DEPONENT: RANDY DOERING

DATE: JANUARY 18, 2017

REPORTER: CRYSTAL HAVENS



	Page 2		Page 4
1	APPEARANCES	1	INDEX
2		2	Page
3	ON BEHALF OF THE PLAINTIFFS, KIMBERLY COLE, ALAN COLE,	3	DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. SHAMBERG 7
4	JAMES MONICA, LINDA BOYD, MICHAEL MCMAHON, RAY SMINKI	EY, 4	EXAMINATION BY MR. DEUTSCH 166
5	JAMES MEDDERS, JUDY MEDDERS, ROBERT PEPERNO, SARAH	5	CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. KUHLMAN 267
6	PEPERNO, AND KELLY MCCOY, ON BEHALF OF THEMSELVES AND		RE-EXAMINATION BY MR. DEUTSCH 270
7	ALL OTHERS SIMILARLY SITUATED:	7	RECROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. KUHLMAN 272
8	KYLE A. SHAMBERG	8	RECROSS ENGINEENTITOTO BY MIC ROTEMPH 272
9	LITE, DEPALMA, GREENBERG, LLC	9	
10	211 WEST WACKER DRIVE, SUITE 500	10	EXHIBITS
11	CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60606	11	Page
12	TELEPHONE NO.: (312) 750-1592	12	COLE
13	E-MAIL: KSHAMBERG@LITEDEPALMA.COM	13	1 2010 E-MAIL WITH DAVID BOBO 47
14	E-MAIL. KSHAMBERG WEHTEDEL ALMA.COM	14	2 PEX PIPE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, JANUARY 28, 5
	ON DELIATE OF THE DIAINTIEES CHAD MEADOW JOHN AND SUS		
15 16	ON BEHALF OF THE PLAINTIFFS, CHAD MEADOW, JOHN AND SUSA PLISKO AND KENNETH MCLAUGHLIN, INDIVIDUALLY AND ON		2009 3 E-MAIL WITH KEN MCCOY 107
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	16	
17	BEHALF OF ALL OTHERS SIMILARY SITUATED:	17	4 OCTOBER 2012 130
18	LAWRENCE DEUTSCH	18	5 PERFORM Q A 2008 136
19	BERGER & MONTAGUE, P.C.	19	6 LETTER WRITTEN BY DOERING 150
20	1622 LOCUST STREET	20	7 WARRANTY 153
21	PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103	21	8 E-MAIL WITH KEN MCCOY 163
22	TELEPHONE NO.: (215) 875-3000	22	
23	FACSIMILE NO.: (215) 875-4604	23	MEADOW
24	E-MAIL: LDEUTSCH@BM.NET	24	44 ORGANIZATION CHART, 2009 167
25		25	45 ORGANIZATION CHART, 2012 171
	Page 3		Page 5
1	APPEARANCES (CONTINUED)	1	EXHIBITS (CONTINUED)
2		2	
3	ON BEHALF OF THE DEFENDANT, NIBCO, INC.:	3	46 E-MAIL WITH THOMAS COE 197
4	KEVIN M. KUHLMAN	4	47 E-MAIL WITH GREG LEHMAN 199
5	LATHROP & GAGE LLP	5	48 E-MAIL OCTOBER 7, 2011 203
6	2345 GRAND BOULEVARD, SUITE 2200	6	49 E-MAIL OCTOBER 27, 2011 204
7	KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64108-2618	7	50 E-MAIL MARCH 6, 2012
8	TELEPHONE NO.: (816) 460-5714	8	58 E-MAIL DECEMBER 23, 2008 225
9	FACSIMILE NO.: (816) 292-2001	9	59 FEB 1, 2011 E-MAIL CHAIN 229
10	E-MAIL: KKUHLMAN@LATHROPGAGE.COM	10	60 MAY 18, 2011 NIBCO LETTER 239
11		11	61 E-MAIL CHAIN 244
12		12	62 E-MAIL CHAIN "TALKING POINTS" 250
13		13	63 OCTOBER 24, 2012 LETTER 256
14		14	64 E-MAIL CHAIN 261
15		15	65 E-MAIL CHAIN 263
16		16	66 LEBANON FACILITY STANDARD OPERATING 264
17		17	PROCEDURES 20.
18		18	67 NIBCO HISTORY WITH CHRISTIANSON PLUMBING 2
19		19	AND NIBCO DOCUMENT
20		20	
21		21	
22		22	
23		23	
24		24	
25		25	
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	Page 6		Page 8
1	STIPULATION	1	A Yes.
2		2	Q How many times?
3	The deposition of RANDY DOERING taken at HILTON GARDEN	3	A Two or three times.
4	INN & SUITES, 2734 CRITTENDEN DRIVE, LOUISVILLE,	4	Q Okay. Did any of those depositions relate to
5	KENTUCKY 40209 on WEDNESDAY, the 19TH day of JANUAR		your employment at NIBCO?
6	2017 at approximately 9:00 a.m.; said deposition was	6	A Yes.
7	taken pursuant to the FEDERAL Rules of Civil Procedure.	7	Q All of them?
8	It is agreed that CRYSTAL HAVENS, being a Notary Public	8	A Yes.
9	and Court Reporter for the State of KENTUCKY, may swear	9	
10	the witness.		Q Did any of the depositions relate to PEX
11	the witness.	10	products that were manufactured or sold by NIBCO?
		11	A Yes.
12		12	Q Okay. Which tell me about the first
13		13	deposition that related to those PEX products?
14		14	A I think the first deposition was a case, I
15		15	believe it was in Oklahoma.
16		16	Q Okay. What were the allegations in that case,
17		17	as you understand it?
18		18	A I'm that that the product was defective.
19		19	That was the allegation, yes.
20		20	Q And what about the other case that you
21		21	mentioned that involved the NIBCO PEX products?
22		22	A That was maybe a year-and-a-half ago or so,
23		23	and it was similar a similar case.
24		24	Q Okay. Was that a case that was brought
25		25	against NIBCO by Christianson Plumbing?
	Page 7		Page 9
1	PROCEEDINGS	1	A I believe so, yes.
2		2	Q And I believe you actually that deposition
3	COURT REPORTER: Sir, if you'll raise your	3	was here at the same hotel; is that right?
4	right hand for me, please?	4	A That is correct. Yes.
5	THE WTINESS: Yes.	5	Q Was it in the same room?
6	COURT REPORTER: Do you solemnly swear or	6	A Yes.
7	affirm the testimony you're about to give will be	7	Q And what was your understanding of the
8	the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the	8	allegations in that Christianson case?
9	truth?	9	A I I don't remember all the specifics.
10	THE WITNESS: I do.	10	Q Okay. Was the plaintiff in that case alleging
11	DIRECT EXAMINATION	11	that NIBCO PEX tubing was defective?
12	BY MR. SHAMBERG:	12	A I believe so, yes.
13	Q Good morning, Mr. Doering.	13	Q Do you remember what the specific defect the
14	A Good morning.	14	plaintiff was alleging was?
15	Q My name is Kyle Shamberg, and I represent the	15	A No. I don't remember the specific defects. I
16	plaintiffs in the Cole versus NIBCO matter.	16	all I know is that they had experienced some
17	A Okay.	17	failures.
18	Q We'll be asking you some questions this	18	
19	morning.	19	Q Okay. Were those failures oxidated? A I don't know.
	<u> </u>		
20	A Okay.	20	Q Do
21	Q Could we start out by having you state your	21	A I I as I recall, I believe there was
22	full name and your date of birth for the record?	22	some installation issues involved in that. I don't
23	A Randy Dean Doering. I was born XX-XX-XXXX.	23	believe that they were all oxidated failures.
24	Q Okay. And have you ever given a deposition	24	Q Okay. Why do you believe that they were
25	before?	25	installation issues involved? Where do you get that?



	Page 10		Page 12
1	A Installation? Just just some things that I	1	Q Okay. And what about a bachelor's degree, do
2	had heard after, you know, we had investigated the	2	you have a bachelor's degree?
3	complaint.	3	A Yes.
4	Q Do you recall what the outcome of that case	4	Q What area of study?
5	was?	5	A Political Science is my major. A
6	A No, because I have not worked for NIBCO for a	6	Q It that
7	year, and I I I don't know what happened.	7	A Bachelor of Arts at Indiana, yes, University.
8	Q So it's still ongoing with NIBCO?	8	Q I'm sorry. I'm already breaking my own rule
9	A I believe so, yes.	9	by trying to cut you off. What year did you get the
10	Q To your understanding?	10	bachelor's degree?
11	A Yeah.	11	A 1976.
12	Q Okay. So I want to talk about some of the	12	Q Okay. So after the bachelor's degree, you
13	ground rules that you've probably heard before in	13	were working for a while, and then you went back and did
14	previous depositions	14	the master's?
15	A Uh-huh.	15	A Yes. I was working for a company that had
16	Q but we'll go over again today. The first	16	given me a promotion, and then they offered to pay for
17	is that when you give your answers, I'll try to let you	17	me to get a to continue my education.
18	finish your answer.	18	Q What company was that?
19	A Okay.	19	A Industrial Plastics Corporation.
20	Q When I ask my questions, if you could let me	20	Q When did you start working for Industrial
21	finish my question, that'll make a cleaner record for	21	Plastics Corporation?
22	Crystal so it'll be clear; is that all right?	22	A 1979.
23	A That's fine.	23	Q Okay. And when you started in 1979, what was
24	Q Okay. And you're doing a good job so far, but	24	your role there?
25	I'll ask that you answer all the questions verbally	25	A I was a quality control inspector.
	Page 11		Page 13
1	rather than by nodding your head or shaking your head or	1	Q What were the job responsibilities of a
2	gesturing so it's also clear on the record	2	quality control inspector?
3	A Okay.	3	A I would measure plastic parts and, you know,
4	Q what your answer is, okay? If you don't	4	just make sure that it was meeting in our standards.
5	understand any of my questions, just let me know,	5	Q Okay. And back in 1979, that quality control
6	A Okay.	6	inspector role wouldn't have involved PEX products; is
7	Q and I'll try to rephrase it or clarify. If	7	that right?
8	you answer the question, I'll assume that you understood	8	A It did not.
9	it, okay?	9	Q What was the next job you had at Industrial
10	A Okay.	10	Plastics?
11	Q And also, we can take a break at any time.	11	A I was a pricing manager. I was responsible
12	Just let myself or Kevin know. But if I have a question	12	for the pricing of our products.
13	pending, I'd like you to answer that question before we	13	Q Okay. How long did you do that for?
14	take the break, all right?	14	A I did that for about four years.
15	A Okay.	15	Q Okay. So you were the quality control
16	Q Okay. What's the highest education level	16	inspector beginning in 1979 until about when?
17	you've received?	17	A Until about 1983.
18	A I hold a Master's in Business Administration	18	Q '83. Okay. And then the pricing manager from
19	at Indiana University.	19	about '83 to '86?
20	Q Okay. What year did you receive that	20	A '83 to '87.
21	master's?	21	Q Okay. And was it at that point you went back
22	A It was 19 I guess I should know this.	22	into the master's program?
23	1988.	23	A Yes.
24	Q 1988?	24	Q Were you still working while you were enrolled
25	A Yes.	25	in the program?



		Page 14		Page 16
1	A	Yes.	1	role?
2	O	As a pricing manager?	2	A I was product managers for Kentrol, which is
3	À	Yes.	3	our schedule AD product line.
4	Q	When you completed the master's program	4	Q How long were you in that role for?
5	after y	you completed the master's program, what was the	5	A I was in that role for two years.
6	next re	ole that you had, if any, at Industrial Plastics?	6	Q Okay. Until about 2001?
7	A	I was a marketing manager.	7	A Correct.
8	Q	Okay. How long were you the marketing manager		Q And, again, not working with PEX products; is
9	for?		9	that correct?
10		I think two years.	10	A Not working with PEX.
11	Q	And what were the job general job	11	Q In 2001, what job did you take at that point?
12	-	nsibilities as marketing manager?	12	A I was product manager for plastic fittings at
13		New product development and the promotion on	13	NIBCO.
14	-	roducts.	14	Q Was NIBCO manufacturing plastic fittings at
15	Q	Any PEX products?	15	that time?
16		No.	16	A Yes.
17 18	Q	After you so now we're about 1990 or so? Yes.	17	Q Okay. Was NIBCO also are you familiar with
19			18 19	the term "sourcing?"  A Not at that time.
20	Q manag	What did you do after you became marketing	20	
21	_	I became plant manager at Industrial Plastics	21	Q Okay. You're familiar with the term? A Yes.
22		oration.	22	Q But NIBCO wasn't sourcing plastic fittings at
23	Q	When did that happen?	23	that time?
24	A	That happened around 1990.	24	A They they were sourcing plastic fittings.
25	0	Okay. And how long were you the plant	25	They were not sourcing any PEX products at that time.
		Page 15		Page 17
1	manag	zer <sup>o</sup>	1	Q How long were you the product manager?
2	_	I was a plant manager for about four years,	2	A From 1991 to
3	until 1		3	Q Sorry, 2000 2001?
4		Okay. And what sort of products was the plant	4	A 2001 to 2006.
5		facturing at that point?	5	Q During that timeframe from 2001 to 2006, did
6		This company made custom plastic extrusions,	6	you have any involvement with PEX products at NIBCO?
7		of them were PEX products or tubing products.	7	A Yes.
8		When did you start at NIBCO?	8	Q What was that involvement?
9	A	I started at NIBCO in 1999.	9	A In 2002, I started researching PEX, the PEX
10	Q	Okay. From the time well, you said you	10	market. And in 2004, we started selling PEX on a
11	were a	a plant manager until around 1994?	11	private label basis.
12	A	Uh-huh.	12	Q In 2002, when you said you started researching
13	Q	At Industrial	13	the PEX market, what kind of research did you do?
14	A	Yes.	14	A It involved market penetration with the
15	Q	Plastics?	15	competitive landscape, what would it take for NIBCO to
16	A	Yes.	16	get into that business.
17	Q	Did you have another role in Industrial	17	Q What, if any, conclusions did you reach based
18		es after that?	18	on the research that you did?
19 20		No. I left the company, and I started working	19	A I believed that we should get into that business.
21		company called Elkhart Plastics in 1996.	20 21	
22	_	Between the time when you were at Elkhart es in '96 or so and you began at NIBCO in '99, did	22	Q Why? A Because the well, several reasons. Copper
23		bs you had in that timeframe involve PEX products?	23	systems were losing market share to PEX because of cost
24		None.	24	and the shortage of labor.
25	Q	When you began at NIBCO in 1999, what was your		Q Okay. You said in 2004, NIBCO started selling
2,5	V	Then you began at 111000 in 1777, what was your	2,5	Q Okay. Tou said in 2004, Mideo stated sching

Page 20 Page 18 1 1 PEX products under a private label? A I was in that role until December of 2014. 2 2 A Yes. Q And so during those six years or so, again, if 3 3 Q From whom was NIBCO acquiring the product you just generally describe what your job 4 responsibilities were as general manager for PEX? 4 itself? 5 A We were buying the tubing from Consolidated 5 A Well, my responsibilities I oversaw the 6 selling of PEX, of the development of new products, the б Plumbing Industries, and we -- I don't recall all of the 7 7 different sources for the fittings and ancillary marketing of PEX products. I also had responsibility, 8 not at the beginning for manufacturing, but then later I 8 products, but there were several other vendors of 9 9 fittings and connections and all the accessories that go was also responsible for -- for the plant itself and the 10 manufacturing. And I did have, you know, responsibility 10 with a PEX system. Q Okay. And you say you don't recall who the 11 for some of the shipping and distribution functions, you 11 manufacturer was of those fittings? 12 know, of the product as well. 12 13 Q At what point did you also start to take on 13 A I believe that we were buying some of them 14 from Consolidated Plumbing Industries and some from 14 the manufacturing aspect? A That was in 20 -- 2012. 15 other sources as well. 15 16 Q Why did you -- why did that become your 16 Q Okay. But you don't recall who the other 17 sources were --17 responsibility at that point? 18 A Before I was general manager, but the plant 18 A No. 19 manager of the PEX plant reported to someone else in our 19 Q -- at this point? A No. I believe that one of them was a company 20 organization more in a functional alignment. But we 20 21 called Sioux Chief. 21 wanted to bring the PEX business together, and the 22 Q Okay. And we'll get a little bit more into 22 company wanted me to move to the Cincinnati area where 23 that, but I first want to finish up kind of what you did 23 the PEX plant was located so that I'd be closer to that 24 with roles in NIBCO up until you left. 24 and -- and, you know, help in the oversight of that 25 25 A Okay. plant. Page 21 Page 19 Q So you said you were the product manager until 1 1 Q Okay. Who was in charge of overseeing the 2 2006. In 2006, how did your role change? 2 manufacturing operations for PEX before you took over 3 3 A I became national sales manager of retail at that role? retail sales at NIBCO. 4 4 A It was Chris Mason. 5 Q Okay. Was that for all products? 5 Q Chris Mason, okay. And you touched on it a 6 little bit, but a decision was made around 2012 to shift 6 Α Yes. 7 7 Q **Including PEX?** that responsibility from Chris to you? 8 Yes. 8 A Yes. Α 9 9 Q But also others? Q Did Chris leave NIBCO at that time? A Correct. 10 10 A No. 11 Q And just generally what were your day-to-day 11 Q What did Chris do at that point? How did his job responsibilities as national sales manager? 12 12 job change? A My duties were, you know, selling our products 13 13 A Well, Chris was vice president of supply 14 to -- I had retail customers assigned to me that I was 14 management, and he -- when we acquire companies or the assets of companies he's usually involved in the 15 responsible for growing their -- our business with them. 15 16 Q How long were you the national sales manager? 16 integration of those companies into NIBCO. And so his 17 Two years. 17 role had pretty much, you know, ended. And then they Α 18 Q So then in 2008, how did your role change 18 wanted me to take over, you know, the -- to just bring 19 19 the business together under one manager. again? 20 20 A I became general manager of PEX piping systems Q Okay. So they kind of wanted to have one 21 at NIBCO. 21 person overseeing all of the operations for the 22 Q Okay. So in 2008 as general manager, you're 22 business? focused exclusively on PEX products? 23 23 A Correct. 24 24 A Yes. That person was you? Q 25 25 How long were you in that role?



	Page 22		Page 24
1	Q So at least for the PEX products, it was sort	1	A In December of 2014, I became general manager
2	of the buck stopped with you; is that fair?	2	of our industrial plastics division at NIBCO.
3	A Yes.	3	Q Okay. Does the industrial plastics division
4	Q Who well, so this question may be too	4	relate to PEX products in any way?
5	general, may be more than one person, but from 2008	5	A No.
6	until 2014, you were the general manager for PEX. Who	6	Q Why did you make that move at that point?
7	did you report to?	7	A Well, they asked me if I would. The general
8	A I reported to Steve Malm.	8	manager of industrial plastics had retired, and I had
9	Q Steve Malm, okay. What was his title at this	9	been product manager when I of Kentrol, which was
10	time?	10	part of industrial plastics when I first came to NIBCO,
11	A President.	11	and I was probably the likely candidate to move over and
12	Q Is he still with NIBCO?	12	run that business.
13	A Yes.	13	Q Did someone take over your role as general
14	Q So you reported directly to Steve. There was	14	manager of PEX at that point?
15	no one kind of in between you?	15	A Yes.
16	A Correct.	16	Q Who was that?
17	Q How many people were reporting directly to you	17	A Ashley Martin.
18	when you were general manager for PEX products?	18	Q Any relation to Rex?
19	A Oh, we had probably around 50 people at the	19	A His daughter.
20	plant, and then we had three to four salespeople, a	20	Q So did you do anything to prepare for this
21	product manager, and so I think that that's about it	21	morning's deposition?
22	there.	22	A Kevin and I spoke briefly yesterday.
23	Q Okay. The product manager, was that Tom Coe?	23	Q Okay. And I obviously don't want you to tell
24	A Yes.	24	me anything that you discussed with Kevin, but about how
25	Q And the salespeople, I believe one of those	25	long did you speak?
	Page 23		Page 25
1	was Kate Emery?	1	A I don't know. About an hour.
2	A Yes.	2	Q Did you review any documents?
3	Q Was Grant Dow one of those people?	3	A No.
4	A Yes.	4	Q Have you reviewed any of the transcripts of
5	Q Who else was reporting to you in sales?	5	any depositions that have been taken in this case?
6	A Well, Kate and Grant. We had I don't know.	6	A No.
7	There are a couple of other people, but their names	7	Q Have you reviewed any summaries or digests of
8	escape me right now.	8	those depositions?
9	Q Okay. And another thing I might have said	9	A No.
10	before is that this isn't necessarily a memory test.	10	Q Did you take any notes for yourself in
11	A Sure.	11	preparing for the deposition?
12	Q It's what you know and what you remember. And	12	A Yes.
13	if those	13	Q Okay. Do you have those with you?
14	A Yeah.	14	A No.
15	Q names do	15	Q Okay. Do you still have them somewhere in
16	A Yeah.	16	your files?
17	Q come to you, sometimes they do,	17	A In my office.
18	A Yeah.	18	Q Okay.
19	Q you know, let me know.	19	MR. SHAMBERG: Kevin, I would request that to
20	A Sure.	20	the extent those aren't privileged that they be
21	Q Let Larry	21	produced.
22	A Sure.	22	MR. KUHLMAN: I'll look into it.
23	Q know, and we'll clarify that.	23	BY MR. SHAMBERG:
24	A Okay.	24	Q Okay. So we'll go back now. You said in
25	Q How did your role change in December of 2014?	25	about 2004 NIBCO began selling PEX tubing that was

Page 28 Page 26 manufactured by CPI; is that accurate? 1 method, and an electron beam is used to affect the 1 2 2 cross-linking of the molecules in the high-density Yes. 3 3 Q And was that sold under a brand name, trade polyethylene. Typically, the EB mean is done in a 4 4 secondary operation after the tubing has been extruded. name? 5 A Yes. 5 Q Okay. Do you recall which type of PEX, which 6 What was that name? cross-linking method Vanguard was using in its tubing? 6 Q 7 7 A NEXT-Pure. A PEXb. Q NEXT-Pure. Were you involved in the project 8 8 Q And the Canadian company that you can't recall 9 9 to begin selling that NEXT-Pure pipe that was purchased the name of, do you know which cross-linking method they from CPI? 10 10 were using? 11 A Well, they were not producing PEX. They 11 A Yes. aspired to produce PEX and -- and would have made the What was your involvement in that? 12 12 O 13 investment to make PEX. Had we entered a relationship 13 A I led it. 14 Q Okay. That's significant involvement. So 14 with them, they probably would have chosen -- they were describe for me generally what, you know, your 15 looking at the time at PEXb, I believe. 15 responsibilities were in terms of leading that project? 16 Q Has NIBCO, at any point, also sold a PEXb 16 17 A Well, we had to find sources of the product, 17 product? so I was responsible for finding, you know, companies 18 18 A Yes. 19 that would sell a private label, you know, the products 19 Q During what timeframe has NIBCO told PEXb 20 for us, deciding what products we're going to offer and 20 tubing? 21 which products we aren't going to offer. And then 21 A I think since -- since the acquisition of the 22 putting together the marketing plan, you know, pricing, 22 assets in 2006, they had been selling a PEXb product 23 selling, strategy, all of that. 23 mostly for a radiant heat applications, radiant heat 24 tubing, sometimes called barrier tubing. 24 Q What investigation did you conduct to find the 25 source of the product? 25 Q And when you say the acquisition in 2006, Page 29 Page 27 1 1 A Well, we visited a number of different you're referring to the acquisition of CPI? 2 companies and -- and based -- our decision was based on 2 A Yeah, the assets of CPI in 2006, yes. 3 those visits and those companies' willingness to work 3 Q NIBCO also -- so NIBCO started selling PEXb in 4 4 around 2006. Was it also manufacturing the PEX at that with us. Q Which companies did you visit? 5 5 point? 6 6 A We visited a company named Vanguard and a MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 7 7 company in Canada in Quebec, and I -- I can't remember A We started selling PEXc in 2000 -- 2004, and 8 their name right now, and Consolidated Plumbing 8 we continued selling PEXb after the acquisition of the 9 9 assets in May of 2006. Industries. Q CPI makes a PEXc product, right? 10 Q Okay. I think you just said NIBCO was selling 10 11 11 PEXc beginning in 2004, and then --Α Q And can you just generally describe for me 12 A Oh, excuse me. I'm sorry. I -- PEX --12 your understanding of the differences between, say, a selling PEXc since 2004, and then started selling PEXb 13 13 14 PEXa, PEXb, and PEXc product? 14 for radiant heat applications in 2006. 15 A Sure. PEXa is -- it's typically called the 15 Q Okay. peroxide method, where peroxide is exposed to the 16 16 A I'm sorry. 17 high-density polyethylene. It causes a -- a chemical 17 Q And was NIBCO manufacturing the PEXb when it 18 reaction that leads to a cross-linking of the -- of the 18 began selling it? 19 molecules. PEXb is the saline method. Again, a 19 A No. Q Okay. What -- has NIBCO ever manufactured 20 chemical is added to the polyethylene, but in this case, 20 21 it's -- it's not added in directly during the 21 PEXb tubing? 22 manufacturing process, but the saline is compounded into 22 23 the raw material itself, and the saline affects the 23 Q When did NIBCO begin manufacturing its own 24 chemical reaction that causes the cross linking of the 24 PEXb tubing? A I believe that it was in -- around 2013. 25 -- of the molecules. With PEXc, it's called the EB 25



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	Page 30		Page 32
1	Q Okay. So certainly more recently	1	features, a little bit easier to handle than the PEXb.
2	A Yes.	2	We thought it would be friendlier for plumbers to
3	Q than PEXc?	3	install, because it's less rigid and a little easier to
4	A Yes.	4	bend. We were also I think that was that was the
5	Q Why did NIBCO decide to begin manufacturing	5	main reason, you know, we just thought it was a unique
6	PEXb tubing in 2013?	6	product. Takes a high capital investment to get into
7	A I think it was just market driven, force of	7	PEXc, so we thought that long term there wouldn't be,
8	some of our customers wanted PEXb, and so we you	8	you know, as many, you know, competitors in that in
9	know, we decided to offer that.	9	that space.
10	Q So customers were specifically saying we	10	Q And you think, I think you said that it was
11	prefer to buy the PEXb from you instead of the PEXc?	11	friendlier for plumbers and easier to handle. So PEXc
12	A Yeah.	12	is easier to work with than the other PEX
13	Q Did they give reasons for why they preferred	13	A Yeah, it's easier to bend.
14	PEXb?	14	Q Okay. Does that make it easier to install in
15	A No. I think sometimes, if we would convert a	15	plumbing applications?
16	customer from one type of PEX to another, if they had	16	A Yeah, it can. It can, yes.
17	been buying from a company that was selling PEXb, you	17	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
18	know, they wanted PEXb as a replacement and reasons like		Q When you were leading the team that was investigating different sources for potential PEX
19	that.	19	products, how did you end up landing on CPI?
20	Q What let's say for the time period from	20	A Well, we we had been contacted by I
21	2006 to 2014.	21	think the way it originally happened, we had been
22	A Yes.	22	
23	Q How did NIBCO's overall sales compare between	23	contacted by one of their salespeople who wanted to sell
24	PEXc and PEXb?	24	us some of their fittings, and and we just started a
25	A Well, most of our sales were in PEX PEXc. I	25	relationship after that.
23		23	Q Do you remember who the CPI salesperson was?
	Page 31		Page 33
1	mean, that was most of what we sold, yes.	1	A John Grunwald was his name, yes.
2	Q Okay. And just for the PEX tubing, could you	2	Q And when the acquisition occurred in 2006, do
3	put a percentage on it in terms of what was PEXc versus	3	you know if John Grunwald came along and joined NIBCO?
4	PEXb.	4	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
5	A Well, probably 90 percent of what we sold was	5	A I don't remember. He left CPI, and I don't
6	was, you know, PEXc.	6	remember when he left.
7	Q So when NIBCO began in 2004, when NIBCO	7	Q Okay. You don't recall if it was before or
8	began sourcing from CPI and selling the PEXc under the		after the acquisition?
9	NEXT-Pure brand?	9	A No, I don't remember.
10	A Yes.	10	Q So after John made contact about the fittings
11	Q Why was the decision made to go with a PEXc	11	and started the relationship, what investigation did you
12	product over a PEXb or a PEXa product?	12	conduct into CPI prior to making the decision to source
13	A We thought that long term it would be the	13	the PEX material from them?
14	lowest cost potentially and would be give us a	14	A Well, we we visited the facility, met with,
15	competitive advantage in the marketplace.	15	you know, their team, talked about PEX in general. And
16	Q Okay. So basically, you could offer a better	16	then once we decided that that we wanted to partner
17	price than competitors who were selling PEXb products?	17	with them, we started a process of testing their
18	A Well, not the no. The pricing decision	18	their products to ensure that they met the applicable
19	is independent of the cost. But, yeah, I mean, we	19	standards. And that is something that NIBCO would do in
20	thought we'd be more competitive in the marketplace if	20	any sourcing decision.
21	we did decide to, you know, offer a price that was lower	21	Q Okay. What testing did NIBCO perform on the
22	than our competitors.	22	CPI PEX products?
	Q Okay. Any other reasons that NIBCO went with	23	A Well, I don't I don't remember all of them.
23			
23 24 25	the PEXc over the PEXb for the next year?  A Yeah. The PEXc had some unique selling	24 25	But a lot of burst testing and long-term pressure testing. And there are tests that NIBCO has developed

		70	
	Page 34		Page 36
1	through the years on all plumbing products that are	1	understand what you're asking.
2	are effective in evaluating the you know, if the	2	Q Let me ask it let me ask it this way. Did
3	product meets the standards.	3	you personally, at any point, become aware that CPI's
4	Q And did NIBCO conduct any kind of testing	4	PEXc tubing suffered from chlorine resistance problems?
5	related to the chlorine resistance of CPI's PEXc tubing?	5	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
6	A I I don't know. I don't remember if we did	6	A We, as an industry, are aware of the effect of
7	or not.	7	chlorine on all PEX products. So our knowledge, or at
8	Q Okay. You don't recall seeing any test	8	least the knowledge that I had at the time, was
9	results specifically related to chlorine resistance at	9	basically from attending industry meetings, PTFA
10	that time?	10	meetings where and PTI meetings, the Plastic Pipe
11	A No. I can't I can't remember all of the	11	Institute, where we talked about issues involving PEX
12	tests that we did.	12	· ·
13		13	products. But from a general standpoint, not from a standpoint of vis-one manufacturer versus another.
14	Q Did CPI provide any documents to NIBCO	14	Q Okay. Let me try to be more specific. In
15	evidencing third-party certifications for the PEXc	15	your role as general manager for PEX products, were you
16	product it was manufacturing?	16	made aware, at any point, that CPI's PEXc tubing had
17	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.  A I don't know. But all of that information's	17	failed chlorine-resistance tests?
18		18	A No.
19	available, you know, online, though. If you go to NSF's	19	
20	site everyone's you know, if someone has a listing,		Q Okay. And then you said in 2006 NIBCO
21	it could be found there, or if you go to IAMPRO, it could be found there. So I don't know if we received	20 21	acquired CPI?  A Yes.
		22	
22	anything from them, but its information that's readily		Q Okay. Was there separate was there a
23	available.	23	separate project initiated which NIBCO was actually
24 25	Q Okay. Well, what about and I understand	24 25	considering acquiring CPI as opposed to just sourcing
23	the fact that the listing would be publicly available,	23	the products?
	Page 35		Page 37
1	but in terms of either communications with third-party	1	A Yes.
2	let's stay there are communications with third-party	2	Q Were you involved in that project?
3	listing agencies, did CPI provide those?	3	A Yes.
4	A I don't recall I don't recall any exchanges	4	Q In what capacity?
5	like that.	5	A I conducted the due diligence of the sales and
6	Q What about test results that had been	6	marketing.
7	performed on CPI's PEXc tubing in order to meet the	7	Q Okay. So what did that due diligence involve
8	applicable standards? Was that provided to NIBCO?	8	for sales and marketing?
9	A I don't no, I don't believe so. But I I	9	A I interviewed the sales manager, and we
10	really don't remember.	10	discussed, you know, how they went to market and the
11	Q In that 2004 timeframe, and as the head of the	11	customer service function and just sales-related
12	project and looking to sourcing from CPI, were you made	12	activities.
13	aware of any chlorine resistance issues with CPI's PEXc	13	Q Who was the sales manager at CPI at that time?
14	tubing?	14	A His name was Martin Compston.
15	A No.	15	Q Okay. And do you recall if he came along with
16	Q Never came up?	16	CPI in 2006 when NIBCO acquired it?
17	A I don't believe so. We're talking about 2004,	17	A Yes.
18	correct?	18	Q So did you discuss with Martin who some of
19	Q Yes.	19	CPI's customers were for the PEXc tubing at that time?
20	A No. No issues.	20	A After the acquisition of the assets, yes.
21	Q Okay. Did NIBCO, at any point, become aware	21	Q Okay. He was probably a little reluctant to
22	of potential chlorine resistance issues with CPI's PEXc	22	give you that information before?
23	tubing?	23	A Yes.
24	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	24	Q And did who were some of the customers that
25	A Can you restate that question? I don't	25	you can recall?



		<u>/                                    </u>	
	Page 38		Page 40
1	A Well, CPI did sell to Menards stores, and they	1	Q And do you remember about how many were
2	sold to wholesale distributors. Mostly smaller	2	retained by NIBCO?
3	wholesale distributors in the United States.	3	A Most of them were. I don't know remember
4	Q Okay. Menards is sort of the big fish?	4	the exact number.
5	A Yeah, for them it was, yes.	5	Q Okay. Aside from things that were duplicate,
6	Q Did after the acquisition in 2006, did	6	like, HR and
7	NIBCO retain Menards as a customer for the PEXc tubing?	7	A Yes.
8	A Yes.	8	Q things like that?
9	Q Did NIBCO retain other CPI customers for PEXc	9	A Uh-huh.
10	tubing?	10	Q Did any of those employees who came from CPI
11	A Yes.	11	over to NIBCO have knowledge regarding product testing
12	Q Can you recall about let's start here. Do	12	of the PEXc tubing?
13	you recall, at the time of the acquisition, about how	13	A I don't know.
14	many customers CPI had for the PEXc tubing, if you	14	Q Okay. Did you have any discussions with
15	recall?	15	anyone at CPI at the time of the acquisition regarding
16	A I don't recall the exact number.	16	the product testing for the PEXc tubing?
17	Q Okay. Do you know a ballpark?	17	A Not at that time, no. Because I was I was
18	A Probably, you know, over 100.	18	responsible I mean, I was part of the team, but we
19	Q And do you recall about how many of those	19	had been busy with selling the product, you know, for a
20	customers NIBCO was able to retain after it purchased	20	couple of years, and it was just natural and not a lot
21	CPI in 2006?	21	changed after the acquisition of the assets other than
22	A No, I don't.	22	making decisions about branding and coordination of
23	Q Is it more than half?	23	salespeople and those kind of fishes.
24	A I'm sure that we retained, you know, most of	24	Q Okay. So it was still so CPI, let's say in
25	them. But whenever there's a change in ownership, there	25	2005, was manufacturing the PEXc tubing in Lebanon,
	Page 39		Page 41
1	can be some people that, you know, don't don't want	1	Ohio, at that facility; is that right?
2	to deal with with a new a new company owning it.	2	A Yes.
3	So but I don't remember. I don't recall losing any	3	Q And continued to after the acquisition?
4	specific customers over that.	4	A Correct.
5	Q After the acquisition in 2006, did CPI	5	Q Okay. Was did NIBCO continue to use the
6	continue as a separate corporate entity for NIBCO?	6	same equipment that CPI had been using, extruder?
7	A No.	7	A Yes. Yeah, that's what we bought.
8	Q Okay. Then they merged with NIBCO; is that	8	Q Did the product change in any way after the
9	right?	9	acquisition of CPI, the PEXc tubing product?
10	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	10	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
11	A After the acquisition of the assets, we	11	A Not that I'm aware of.
12	there were certain functions between CPI and NIBCO that	12	Q Okay. So you were still using the same resin?
13	were a duplication, accounting and customer service, and	13	A I believe so.
14	so those were some of the people at the CPI	14	Q Same recipe, basically, it just the print
15	headquarters were you know, who were no longer needed	15	stream was there; is that correct?
16	because we had those functions at NIBCO.	16	A If we're talking about the time of the
17	Q Were there any operations that continued to	17	acquisition, everything was the same.
18	function solely under strike that. After the	18	Q Yeah. And prior to the reformulation, I mean?
19	acquisition, did NIBCO retain CPI employees?	19	A Correct.
20	A Some, yes.	20	Q Do you know what happened to CPI's inventory
21	Q Do you know how many employees CPI had at the	21	of the PEXc tubing at the time of the acquisition?
22	time of the acquisition, ballpark?	22	A We we continued to sell the tubing that had
23	A Oh, I'm sure there's probably around the same	23	the CPI brand on it. But at some point, we switched all
24	number. There's probably, like, around 40. I would say	24	the manufacturer of all the tubing well, shortly
25	between the plant and the office people and	25	after the well, I can't remember exactly when we

		12	
	Page 42		Page 44
1	switched, but after May 2006, at some point after that,	1	Q How did you reach that conclusion?
2	I don't think it was that very first day, but shortly	2	A Well, you know, we we saw a trend towards
3	after that, we started branding it as NIBCO.	3	more water recirculation systems, and some some
4	Q Okay. So there was some period of time	4	consumers and installers were offering water
5	A Yeah.	5	recirculation in homes and, you know, we felt it was
6	Q after the acquisition?	6	from a market standpoint, that's something that we
7	A Yeah. We continued.	7	needed.
8	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	8	Q So was it a market-driven decision?
9	A Yeah. I don't remember exactly what happened	9	A Yes.
10	to that that inventory, if we we sold it or if we	10	Q Were customers coming to NIBCO and saying
11	just, you know, suspended it. I don't remember.	11	well, let me backtrack for a second. So the PEXc tubing
12	Q Okay. Who would have been responsible at	12	that NIBCO was selling prior to the reformulation
13	NIBCO for the decision as to how to disposition CPI's	13	project?
14	inventory after the acquisition?	14	A Yes.
15	A I'm not sure who would be responsible for	15	Q That was 1006 tubing, correct?
16	that. I mean, Chris Mason was responsible for the	16	A Correct.
17	manufacturing, but I I don't know. I don't know. I	17	Q Okay. And can you just tell me briefly what
18	never thought about it at the time, so	18	those integers signify?
19	Q You weren't involved in that decision?	19	A Okay. The well, the 1 the 1, I think
20	A No.	20	that I got to tell you, Kyle, it's been awhile since
21	Q And we touched on this a little bit, but at	21	I went through this, but it's just there's different
22	some point, did NIBCO reformulate the PEXc tubing it was	22	tests and that first number relates to the amount of
23	manufacturing?	23	time that the water can be circulating in a system at
24	A Yes.	24	you know, in a home.
25	Q When did that occur?	25	Q Okay. So it deals with the frequency of
	Page 43		Page 45
1	A It occurred, like, around 2012 or '13. I	1	recirculation of water?
2	think maybe 2013 is as I recall.	2	A Yes.
3	Q Okay. It was only was the to date, has	3	Q Okay.
4	the PEXc tubing only been reformulated once, or has it	4	A Uh-huh.
5	occurred more than once?	5	Q And what about the other numbers, if you
6	A Just under under NIBCO, I believe just	6	remember?
7	once, yes.	7	A Well, the last number, which is actually the
8	Q To your knowledge, did NIBCO ever consider	8	it's the last two numbers, 06 I believe is that
9	reformulating the product again?	9	number, relates I'm trying to remember. It maybe
10	A Oh, since 2013?	10	relates to the U no, I don't think it was U period. I
11	Q Yes.	11	can't really remember what that what those last two
12	A I'm not aware of that.	12	were.
13	Q What was your involvement in the reformulation	13	Q Okay. Well, at the time you were general
14	projects?	14	manager for PEX would you have known?
15	A Well, I was involved in the initial decision	15	A Yeah. Yeah. I've been away for for a
16	that we should, you know, move ahead with it. That was	16	couple of years, so
17	mostly my involvement, and then receiving reports from	17	Q Do you recall now what the designation was for
18	our technical people and the progress they were making.	18	the reformulated PEXc tubing?
19	Q Okay. So there was a discussion at NIBCO as	19	A I believe it was 3308, I believe.
20	to should we reformulate the product?	20	Q Okay. So that first number, then, really
21	A Yes.	21	includes the
22	Q And you were involved in making that decision?	22	A It's the the second number is the UV, yeah.
23	A That's correct.	23	Q Okay.
24	Q Obviously, the decision was ultimately yes?	24	A Yeah.
25	A Yes.	25	Q So were customers coming to NIBCO and saying

	73	73	
	Page 46		Page 48
1	"We want a 3 rather than a 1?"	1	this document that's been marked as Plaintiff's Doering
2	A Well, I don't think it was as simple as that.	2	1. And I want to focus on this e-mail, Wednesday, March
3	I think that just we we may have been losing some	3	31, 2010 from David Bobo to a number of people including
4	business because they wanted something higher than I	4	yourself; do you see that e-mail?
5	believe the 1 is a 25 percent recirculation. Customers	5	A Yes.
6	wanted something higher than that.	6	Q Who's David Bobo?
7	Q Aside from customers wanting better	7	A David Bobo was the director of engineering at
8	performance in recirculation systems, were there any	8	NIBCO.
9	other reasons that NIBCO decided to undertake the	9	Q Director of engineering, okay. Was that his
10	reformulation project?	10	to your recollection, was that his title at the time
11	A I think that was the main reason. But I I	11	that he would have written this e-mail in 2010?
12	think that, you know, any anything that you can do to	12	A I think so.
13	make your product, you know, better is something good to	13	Q Okay. And in this e-mail, he's describing
14	do.	14	some NSF NRT test results related to PEXc tubing; is
15	Q How would reformulating the tubing have made	15	that accurate?
16	it better?	16	A Yes.
17	A Well, it's just, you know, obviously, if it	17	Q Okay. Now, he mentions in his first paragraph
18	has a higher recirculation value, it's going to have,	18	that starts, "Good news." And the third line there he
19	you know, some appeal to you know, to people and a	19	says, "We should now have the option of adding the NSF
20	perception that it, you know, may be better.	20	mark back into the print stream without risk." NSF is a
21	Q Okay. So it's really the perception that it	21	third-party certifier, correct?
22	may be better than rather than it being a physically	22	A Yes.
23	better project?	23	Q Do you know why the NSF mark had been removed
24	A Yeah, I think so. I think so, yeah.	24	from the tubing at some point prior to this
25	Q Was one of the reasons for the reformulation	25	communication?
23			
	Page 47		Page 49
1	project concern that the 1006 tubing would fail	1	A No, I don't.
2	chlorine-resistance tests?	2	Q Okay. You weren't a part of the discussions
3	A No, I don't believe so.	3	at that time in terms of removing the NSF mark from the
4	Q Okay. No one ever described that to you as	4	print stripe?
5	the reason or one of the reasons?	5	A You know, I'm not sure, Kyle. You know,
6	A No. I mean, we we talked about, you know,	6	there's, you know, a lot of testing that's been done
7	chlorine resistance, and I think you want to do anything	7	that's done periodically and, you know, I was I kept
8	to make, you know, your product better, yes.	8	in the loop, but I'm not you know, I wasn't part of
9	Q When you say talked about chlorine-resistance	9	all the details. I basically, you know, let my
10	problems, what kind of discussions were those?	10	engineers, you know, handle these matters.
11	MR. KUHLMAN: Is that what you were referring	11	Q So in this e-mail, Mr. Bobo says that the NSF
12	to when	12	DLT tests report and confirm that the testing had been
13	A No. I'm talking about well, you're saying,	13	completed with the half-inch blue DURA-PEX pipe, and it
14	"Chlorine-resistant problem." I'm saying, you know,	14	conformed with the STMFA-76; is that fair? Fair
15	what can we do to make the product even more chlorine	15	description of what it says?
16	resistant. It wasn't as I recall, it wasn't a	16	A Yes.
17	reaction to problems. It was a reaction to make you	17	Q And he says, "As such, our listing should be
18	know, an opportunity to make the product better.	18	relatively safe within this after the next three years?"
19	Q Okay. I'm going to show you a document.	19	A Uh-huh.
20	A Sure.	20	Q "We should now have the option of adding NSF
21	(EXHIBIT 1 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)	21	mark back into the print stripe?"
22	Q So I'll have some questions about it. If you	22	A Uh-huh.
23	could please take a minute and just review the document.	23	Q Does that does reading this e-mail make you
24	A Uh-huh.	24	believe that the NSF mark was removed based on concerns
25	Q Okay. All right. So I want to ask you about	25	that NSF would no longer certify the product?

Case 3:13-cv-07871-FLW-TJB Document 131-10 Filed 07/28/17 Page 15 of 113 PageID: Page 50 Page 52 1 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. A Well, I think that we -- you know, we -- we 1 2 2 A There's a -- you know, there's a number of made a decision to reformulate, and David Bobo or some 3 3 reasons why an NSF mark might be taken off temporarily, people in the technical area may have had some concerns and -- and so I -- I don't know exactly what the reason 4 4 about testing and testing protocol. But, you know, the 5 was in this instance. 5 -- there's a difference between, you know -- there's a б б Q And what's your understanding of what David is difference between having a material that can -- can be 7 7 saying in this e-mail in terms of the listing being tested and -- and any, you know, quality concerns that 8 relatively safe? Why do you think it was relatively 8 you may have about a product. 9 9 Q Okay. Can you explain that a little bit? I'm 10 not sure. You said that --10 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 11 A I guess what he's saying is we passed the 11 A Well, I'm -- you know, I'm probably getting test, and we don't have to get retested for another 12 too far into this than I should, but there -- within our 12 three years is what -- is how I read it. 13 industry there's been a lot of controversy about the --13 14 Q And he goes on in the next paragraph -- (Knock 14 the validity of all this testing. So when you -- and so at door.) 15 some of the discussions here within our company, you 15 16 MR. KUHLMAN: Let's go off the record for a 16 know, also involved concerns for our entire industry 17 second. 17 about, you know, the test that was being done, and does (OFF THE RECORD) 18 it truly evaluate how good a product is or not. I'm not 18 19 BY MR. SHAMBERG: 19 the technical guy, so I don't know all the specifics of 20 Q Okay. So we're still looking at this Exhibit 20 it, but I know that at this time, you know, everyone in 21 , and I'm just going to ask a couple more questions 21 our industry had concerns about the testing protocols. 22 about it. Referring you back to David Bobo's March 31st 22 Q Do you know at this time, say in 2010, who was 23 e-mail letter. In the second full paragraph, he says 23 performing the testing for third-party certification for that, "The half-inch half pipe continued to exhibit a 24 NIBCO, for the PEXc tubing? 24 25 large range of test results." And then it says that, 25 A In 2010, no, I -- I don't recall.

Page 51

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"That range of test results reinforces our need for the reformulation project." Does that indicate to you that the test result that NIBCO was receiving related to the PEXc tubing indicated that the product needed to be reformulated?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

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A Well, you know, I entrusted David Bobo and our insurance staff to, you know, take care of these things, to manage, you know, the product, the technical aspects of the product, particularly when it's involved -- it involved testing with -- within itself. And so you know, I don't have a window in his mind why, you know, he -- he stated that.

Q Did Mr. Bobo ever come to you while you were the general manager of PEX products and say, "The test results that we're getting show that we need to reformulate the PEXc tubing?"

A I don't recall specific -- anything specific like that. You know, we -- we would have meetings where we'd talk about these matters and then, you know, make, you know, decisions as a group on the way to proceed based on the recommendation of our technical team.

O Did anyone on the technical team ever tell you

Q Did anyone on the technical team ever tell you that the test results were indicating that the product needed to be reformulated?

Q Okay. At any point in time do you know who was performing that testing for NIBCO?

A Well, we've -- we've -- I mean, we've had testing done by a number of different sources. NSF, IAPMO, Jana Labs, they all did testing for us, yes.

Q Okay. Let's start with Jana Labs. Is Jana Labs a well-regarded testing laboratory?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A Well, I don't -- what do you mean by "well-regarded"?

Q Are the results of its testing considered valid within the industry?

A I think -- I think that they're a laboratory. I mean, they're certified. They're probably the largest plastic tubing laboratory in the world. So you know, many people use them.

Q Do you have any reason to doubt the veracity of Jana's testing on NIBCO's products?

A I have no basis for doubting the accuracy of their testing.

Q Has NIBCO ever sold PEXc tubing that failed to pass the chlorine-resistance test?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q Would NIBCO ever do that?

A No. Well, I mean, if it's been passed by NSF,



Page 54 Page 56 I mean, NSF makes the decision whether, you know, they 1 1 A It's -- well, I'm not exactly sure, but I 2 have the listing or not. I mean, you can even -- and I 2 think it's, like, a temporary listing for your product. 3 3 believe at one point we even had listing with NSF and Q Okay. It's, I guess, set to last for a 4 IAPMO, so -- but NIBCO wouldn't sell anything that we 4 certain amount of time that would be shorter than your 5 felt, you know, did not -- wasn't capable of meeting a 5 normal certification? 6 6 A No. Again, that was -- this is not my area of standard. 7 7 Q If NIBCO PEXc tubing was certified by a thirdexpertise, so you know, I don't -- I don't know exactly 8 party listing agency, but that same tubing had failed a 8 what it is. 9 9 chlorine-resistance test, would NIBCO sell that tubing? Q So maybe I'm boiling this down too much, but 10 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 10 as general manager of PEX, your job was essentially to 11 A I -- I don't know. The -- you know, typically 11 sell PEX products, right? you have testing done and then share that testing with 12 A Yeah. I mean, to sell it, you know, manage 12 13 the listing agency and then they make those decisions. I 13 the -- the operation. But when it came to the standards 14 mean, our industry's very regulated. We aren't making 14 and the certifications, you know, it's very complicated 15 those decisions. The listing agencies are making those 15 as you can see from going through all the e-mails you've 16 decisions based on the test data. So it's entirely 16 probably read and, you know, we had technical teams that 17 possible for them to look at a test and say, "Well" --17 dealt with these issues as far as the listings. 18 you know, and take that -- that data and make a decision 18 Q But you had -- so in that role, if you had 19 on whether it meets the standards for that product. But 19 gone to Steve Malm and said, "I've doubled our revenue 20 that's typically their responsibility to do that, you 20 for PEXc tubing sales last year," he'd probably be happy 21 know, otherwise companies could do anything they wanted. 21 with that, correct? MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 22 Q Okay. So let me ask you this hypothetical. 22 23 You're the general manager for PEX. And a salesperson 23 A Yeah, I would be, too. comes to you and says, "All right, Randy, we got this 24 24 Q And I'm sure you'd be happy as well? 25 order, a big order from a big customer for our 1006 PEX 25 A Yes. Page 57 Page 55 tubing?" 1 Q But is it fair to say that in order to sell 1 2 2 that PEXc tubing, it needs to be certified by a third-A Uh-huh. 3 3 Q "And it's been certified by NSF. We've got it party agency, or is that not fair? 4 stamped on the print stream." But also tell you that 4 A It's -- listing are important, yes. 5 5 this tubing did not pass the chlorine-resistance test Q If the tubing was not certified by any agency 6 to the applicable ASTM standards, would you be able to 6 when tested, even though it's been certified. Do you 7 7 sell that tubing to the customer? sell that tubing, practically speaking? 8 8 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. A Well, you -- you want to be listed by an 9 9 agency and, you know, these are decisions that, you A Well, I don't think -- I mean, a situation 10 like that is never going to occur because, you know, NSF 10 know, companies make and, you know, who you want to use 11 takes the test results, and they make the decision 11 There's some latitude among manufacturers on, you know, 12 12 whether you meet the standard or not. who you want to use. Some will have multiple listing, 13 Canadian listings, US listing. You know, it just --13 Q What if the -- what if that tubing had been 14 granted a -- granted certification based on a 14 just depends. 15 provisional standard that was no longer operating at 15 Q If NIBCO's PEXc tubing had no certification at 16 that point? Would that change your answer to that 16 all, do you know any NIBCO customers, who if you went to 17 them and said, "Our tubing is not certified by any third 17 question? party in any country," would they purchase that tubing 18 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 18 19 A I don't know. I don't know exactly what --19 from you? 20 20 A Well, I -- I don't know. You know, typically what you mean by that. Q Are you familiar with what a provisional 21 21 an inspector at a house will look at the tubing, and I



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agencies?

A Yeah, yeah, yeah.

listing is with respect to third-party certification

What's a provisional listing?

don't know how closely they look at it. I mean, what

situation. So I don't -- I don't know what the impact

would be if you tried to sell tubing without a listing.

you're suggesting is a pretty big hypothetical

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	Page 58		Page 60
1	Q NIBCO has never tried to do that, correct?	1	we have here, is January 28, 2009. Do you believe it
2	A No.	2	would have been around that time that you would have
3	Q Do you believe that deciding not to certify	3	first seen this document?
4	the tubing would negatively impact sales?	4	A Yes.
5	A Yeah, probably, yes.	5	Q Okay. And did you review the document at the
6	Q So at least to a certain extent, having third-	6	time you received it?
7	party certification is going to at least improve sales	7	A Yes.
8	compared to not having the certification, correct?	8	Q If you turn to page 3 of the document well,
9	A I think it's more just a ticket for entry, you	9	first of all, before we get into that, this is a
10	know, to to the game, I mean	10	document titled PEX Pipe Development Strategy with Jana
11	Q You kind of have to have it?	11	Laboratories that was written by David Bobo; is that
12	A Yeah. You have to have a third-party	12	accurate?
13	certification from someone. Doesn't have to necessarily	13	A Yes.
14	be NSF, but someone.	14	Q All right. So then on page 3 there, in the
15	Q So as the general manager of PEX, you were	15	second full paragraph that begins, "At the time of
16	aside from trying to sell a good product, you were	16	purchase," Mr. Bobo writes, "The original product
17	trying to sell as much of the product as possible?	17	listings granted to CPI by NSF noted that certain
18	A Yes.	18	colors, red and orange do not meet the minimum criteria
19	Q And part of what's necessary to do that is	19	50-year extrapolated line for chlorine resistant and
20	having certification by some entity somewhere. But yet,	20	that the additional colors do not have a large margin of
21	it sounds like what you're saying is in terms of all of	21	safety when compared to the minimum requirements.
22	the details of that certification, you just left that in	22	Subsequent testing has shown that the variation within
23	the hands of the technical people?	23	the product is such that our continued listing third-
24	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	24	party certification and our ability to sell product in
25	A You know, I was aware of what was going on at	25	the marketplace is in jeopardy"; do you see that
	Page 59		Page 61
1	at a higher level, but I didn't get involved in all	1	language?
2	the details of it and where we were at with a particular	2	A Yes.
3	test or discussions our people may or may not have with,	3	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
4	you know, listing agencies. I mean, that was their	4	Q Does this change your previous answer at all
5	responsibility. You know, typically you don't get	5	with respect to the reasons for the reformulation
6	nontechnical people involved with technical people in	6	project?
7	these kind of things. They speak a different language.	7	A Well, I I think that from a sales and
8	Q And, again, none of the technical people that	8	marketing what David Bobo is discussing here is the
9	worked for you at NIBCO came to you and said, "The	9	ability to pass, you know, certain chlorine-resistance
10	tubing that we're selling failed chlorine-resistance	10	tests, and I think that certainly addressing that was
11	tests"; is that right?	11	was part of the decision. From a sales and marketing
12	A I I don't recall anyone specifically coming	12	standpoint, though, you know, the change really was
13	to me and saying we failed the test, yes.	13	driven by some market forces that we were that we
14	Q Okay. We'll mark this document Exhibit 2.	14	were seeing. We entrusted our technical team to, you
15	I'll ask you some questions about it. This will be a	15	know, maintain the listing. So that, you know,
16	little bit more of a reading test than the last one.	16	obviously, was, you know, a big a concern of theirs,
17	A Okay.	17	and it was part of the decision.
18	(EXHIBIT 2 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)	18	Q At the time that you saw this document in
19	A Thank you. Okay.	19	early 2009, did the fact that certain products that
20	Q Have you had a chance to review this document	20	NIBCO was selling did not meet the minimum criteria for
21	that we've marked as Exhibit 2?	21	chlorine resistance concern you?
22	A Yes.	22	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
23	Q Have you seen this document before?	23	A I had no concerns about the quality of the
24	A Yes.	24	products that we were selling. The you know, like I
25	Q Okay. And the date, at least on the document	25	said before, there's been a lot of controversy in our
			-

Page 62 Page 64 industry over the validity of the testing that's being Certifications"? 1 1 2 done, and it's such that even if the product is too 2 A Uh-huh. good, it can fail tests, because it's based on a linear 3 3 And in the sentence that begins on this page, 4 4 relationship. So I -- at this time, doing the things goes onto the next page, "The reports from these tests 5 that we needed to do to maintain a listing were 5 show that failing to marginally acceptable (depending б б completely separate from the quality of the product that upon resin and color) results were obtained by CPI with 7 7 we were selling. both the current resin from Total as well as sample Q What makes you believe that a product is a 8 resins from Equistar. NIBCO is currently producing and 8 9 9 quality product even if it fails testing for third-party selling PEX pipe with the following test results and certification? 10 listings as transferred from CPI." And then there this 10 11 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. sort of chart and the chart indicates that the red and 11 12 12 We sell -- at the time, we were selling orange had a result of fail for the chlorine resistant 13 anywhere from 50 to 75 million feet a year. Over a ten-13 test; is that what the document says? 14 year period, that's, you know, millions of feet, and we 14 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. had very few issues in the field. In the field, the 15 15 A Yes, but it also has an asterisk that says, 16 issues that we investigated were not because of the 16 "It is theorized that although unacceptable results were 17 failure of the tubing itself. So I had high confidence 17 obtained for the red and orange colors, the dependent 18 in the quality of -- of the product in spite of the fact 18 listing was granted due to the relative newness of the 19 that there may have been some issues, you know, with the 19 standard." 20 chlorine test and NSF. 20 Q Okay. And those dependent listings were 21 Q Why do ASTM standards exist? 21 granted to CPI in 2005; is that correct? 22 A Well, this is not my area of expertise, but 22 A I don't know when they were granted. 23 ASTM standards typically are put together by an industry 23 Q Okay. If we turn quickly just to page 9, the next page in the document. There's a table here labeled on a product so that there's some standardization. 24 24 25 Q Standardization in terms of what? 25 "Chlorine Resistance Testing Timeline"; do you see that? Page 63 Page 65 1 A Of -- of -- of the properties of the product. 1 A Yes. 2 Q Okay. And you also said the pipe industry is 2 And if you look in the -- at the left there's 3 a heavily-regulated industry? 3 a colored column that has years in it and there's a A Yes. Yeah, they regularly came to our plant 4 section for the year 2005. Towards the bottom of that 4 5 5 without notice and took samples and took them back to section there's a red arrow pointing to the date 11-05; the lab and tested them, and we never failed a single 6 б do you see that? 7 7 test. So there, again, that's another reason why I A Yes. 8 didn't get too concerned about, you know, these issues 8 Q Okay. And then that appears to be a PEXc 9 in this memo. 9 product manufactured with the Total resin, and it has 10 Q Do you know whether a third-party entity ever 10 failures listed for the red and the orange pipe; do you 11 conducted testing on red pipe that NIBCO was 11 see that? 12 manufacturing? 12 A Yes. A Well, I don't know. In this report, I think 13 13 Q Okay. So based on that information, does that 14 it said that some testing had been done on red pipe, so 14 lead you to believe that the dependent listing was 15 I guess some testing had been done. 15 provided for the red and orange pipe sometime around 16 Q Okay. The testing referenced in this report 16 2005? showed that the red pipe had failed the test, correct? 17 17 A This is what the report says. 18 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 18 Q So the dependent listing was granted at the 19 A Yeah, but I think -- I think it -- I mean, it 19 time due to the relevant -- relative newness of the 20 didn't impact the listing, though. NSF had made -- I 20 standard. don't know the exact reason, but NSF had gone ahead and 21 21 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 22 approved it. 22 Q But at the time this report was drafted, it 23 Q Okay. So yeah, on that point, would you turn 23 was about three, maybe four years -- about three years 24 to page 7 of the document? And sort of towards the 24 later, correct? bottom it says, "Section 3.5 CPI and NIBCO History of 25 25 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.



Case 3:13-cv-07871-FLW-TJB Document 131-10 Filed 07/28/17 Page 19 of 113 PageID: Page 66 Page 68 1 1 This is what the report says. A Yeah. 2 The standard really wasn't really new at the 2 Q And so another question on page 8 of the 3 3 time this report was drafted, correct? document. In the paragraph that begins, "An independent 4 4 listing versus a dependent listing"; do you see that A You know, I -- I don't -- again, you know, our paragraph? 5 technical people handled these -- these matters with 5 6 listings, so I am not familiar with all these details A Yes. б 7 7 that you're asking me about the newness of a standard or Q So at the end of that paragraph Mr. Bobo how long it's still new or not or how long you have it. 8 writes, "A recent change has occurred in the standards 8 9 9 So you know, I'm sorry, I can't answer some of these governing dependent listings so that additional data 10 questions you're asking me. 10 points test samples must be included. This change is Q But I guess the bottom line in what you're 11 expected to further restrict the ability to gain 11 12 independent listing." Is that kind of what you're 12 saying is the fact that the red and orange pipe had failed the chlorine-resistance test wasn't particularly 13 talking about with respect to those data points that 13 14 significant to you as the general manager of the PEX 14 need to be considered? 15 15 A I have no way of knowing if that's what he's products? 16 16 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. referring to here. 17 A It was -- it was a concern in terms of third-17 Q Okay. If we go to page 12 in the same party listings, but it had no impact on whether I felt 18 document there's a section 4.2.1 entitled "Maintain the 18 19 the product met quality standards or not, that it was --19 product listing"; do you see that section? 20 it had no impact on how I felt about the quality of what 20 A Yes. 21 we were selling in the field. 21 Q And in this section Mr. Bobo says that, "The 22 Q I believe you mentioned before that, at least 22 primary approach to maintaining the current product 23 in your view, there's some controversy in the industry 23 listing would need to attempt to transfer the existing about the validity of the chlorine-resistant testing? product listing with NSF to an additional listing agency 24 24 25 25 (i.e., IAMPO). The goal is to list without performing A Yes. Page 67 1 1 Q We talked about it a little bit. Can you 2 describe a little bit more why the validity has been 2 to -- not wanting to have performed any additional 3 3 called into question, let's say? testing at that point? 4 A Well, I'm -- you know, I'm not an expert on 4 A I'd say expenses, you know, to -- sometimes 5 5

this, but I know that there have been cases in the past where product that actually performed too well failed the test because of the way the test protocol's been written, and it's based on kind of a regression curve, and if a data point that is too low or a data point that is too high can both be bad. And so it made no sense to us that if you test a product that actually does much better than it is expected, that it wouldn't pass the test. So you know, people like our technical people understand this a lot more than I do. I have only a layman's understanding of this. But in talking to our technical people and people within our industry, there's been a lot of controversy about the testing protocols and whether they're really measuring what we're trying to measure.

Q Okay. And I certainly don't claim --

A Just from a --

22 Q -- to be an expert --

23 A Just from my general standpoint.

-- in that either. And that's why I'm just 24

25 trying to understand.

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any additional testing." Why would your goal not want

listing agencies will -- sometimes they want their own lab to do the testing, but sometimes they'll accept data from -- from other sources. So it's just -- my understanding is that it's just a way for reducing cost if you have to go through a bunch of tests again.

Q Okay.

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A If a listing is who would accept data from a particular lab.

Q Was there any concern that the product wouldn't pass the testing?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A I just -- again, you know, David was the technical guy. It's not uncommon for us to have multiple listings, and this isn't -- there's nothing unusual with -- with doing something like this.

Q At the time, did you have any concern that if the product was retested it would fail the chlorineresistance testing?

A Other than just reading the report, and I mean, obviously, if being in the report there's concerns about some variability, you know, during -- during



Page 70 Page 72 testing that, as Mr. Bobo stated, might jeopardize the thought it was fine. We had people -- we had people at 1 1 2 listing. But that was, you know, my only concern. 2 NIBCO that have been doing this for 20, 30 years, and so 3 3 O And if you didn't have a listing for the they, you know, they understand the testing. They have 4 product -- a listing for the product, that would hurt 4 engineering backgrounds and, you know, that's -- that's 5 sales, right? 5 their job. б 6 A It may or may not. I mean, it's kind of Q And, again, none of these technical people --7 7 uncharted territory. You know, we always sell products well, let me ask again. Did any of the technical people 8 that do have-third party independent listings. I'm sure 8 come to you and say, "The red and orange pipe failed the 9 9 there are -- NIBCO's never done it, but I'm sure there's chlorine tests?" 10 10 some people that have sold products without listings, MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 11 and then what happened is if a home inspector looks at A I don't remember a specific discussion about 11 the tubing and doesn't see a mark on it, you know, they 12 that. I'm sure that we had meetings, or we talked 12 13 could rip it out and take it out. But I mean, what 13 about, you know, David's recommendation. We talked 14 you're -- typically you want to tell what listing. When 14 about, you know, listings in general. 15 it's IABMO or NSF or CSA, you know, it's -- and there's 15 Q So earlier, we discussed the cross-linking 16 others beyond that that you can get as well. It just -method for PEXc pipe? 16 17 it depends on what markets you want to penetrate and who 17 A Yes. 18 -- you know, there are people that specify certain 18 Q And that involves, again, I'm not a technical 19 19 products with certain listings, so you know, it behooves person, essentially using electrons to strengthen the 20 you to have, you know, one or more listings so that you 20 molecular bonds; is that --21 don't limit your commercial opportunities. 21 A Yes. 22 Q Okay. And you touched a little bit on this 22 -- fair? What entity performed cross-linking 23 right now, but I wanted to ask: How did NIBCO determine 23 for NIBCO in 2006, let's say? which third-party entity it will seek certification A There's a company called E-BEAM Services 24 24 25 from? 25 located in Lebanon, Ohio. Page 73 Page 71 1 Q It was actually in the same facility, 1 A Well, I -- I wasn't involved in those 2 decisions. But we've -- you know, we've had 2 essentially, as the manufacturing facility, right, or 3 3 relationships with most, if not all, of the third-party right next door? 4 listing agencies. But that is part of the engineering 4 A Yes. When we acquired the assets of the 5 5 department's decision. I'm not involved in those company, we leased space from E-BEAM Services, and then 6 later we acquired a building across the street and moved 6 decisions or was not involved in those decisions. 7 7 Q Okay. So you just want them to tell you that the extrusion equipment there and continued to use them 8 8 the product is listed with someone, and that's -as the E-BEAM supplier. 9 9 Q Okay. So it was part of the decision then to A Correct. 10 -- okay? 10 make and sell PEXc tubing as compared to PEXb or PEXa, Q 11 Yes. 11 the fact that E-BEAM Services was readily available? Α 12 12 A Well, it's a part of it. I mean, that was --Q And, again, if that listing is based on a provisional listing that was no longer in effect at the 13 that is what we, you know, had been selling, and we had 13 14 time, that's okay, too, right? 14 a relationship with them and they did a great job and, 15 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 15 you know, we wanted to continue that. A Well, again, the technical people and the 16 Q As of the last date that you were employed by 16 17 NIBCO, was NIBCO still using E-BEAM Services to 17 third-party listing people, I don't understand all the 18 intricacies of it, but as general manager, you know, I 18 crosslink the PEXc tubing? 19 wanted to have listings, and I, you know, entrusted our 19 A I believe so, yes. 20 insuring people to, you know, ensure that that occurred. 20 Q Do you recall during your time as general manager for PEX products having any concerns about the 21 Q Do you think in retrospect you should have 21 22 been more involved in certification issues as general 22 quality of cross-linking that E-BEAM was performing on



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A No. I think, you know, I knew what was going

on, and I supported what we were doing and, no, I

the PEXc tubing?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

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Page 74 Page 76 1 1 Q No, it was you don't recall? Yes. 2 A I had no -- no, I had no concerns about the 2 Q And so Mr. Bobo writes, "By undertaking this 3 quality of the work they did. 3 program, NIBCO will be in a position to," among other 4 Q Okay. Let me ask, turning back to this 4 things, "provide a PEX pipe product that is always in 5 document here, Exhibit 2? 5 compliance with current standards." As the general 6 б A Uh-huh. manager for PEX products, was it important to you that 7 7 Q On page 13. There's a section 4.2.3 entitled the PEX products you were selling were always in "Improvement of the current E-BEAM process." 8 compliance with the current standards? 8 9 9 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 10 10 Q And, again, Mr. Bobo writes, "NIBCO's A Yes. understanding of the process and impacted variables 11 Q Has NIBCO ever switched from one third-party 11 associated with E-BEAM Services has been identified as 12 certification entity to another because it lost its 12 lacking and is recognized as a major potential source of listing for a PEX product? 13 13 14 product variation both along the pipe axis and pipe 14 A I don't know. I -- I don't know. circumference." At the time that this document was 15 Q Is that something you would have been made 15 16 created, or at least the time that you reviewed it, do aware of as general manager if it occurred? 16 17 you remember there being variation along the pipe axis 17 A Well, I mean, what you're saying is you have a 18 and pipe circumference of the PEXc tubing? 18 listing with one, and you lose it, and then you don't 19 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 19 have anything, and then you switch to another one. I 20 A No. You have to understand, we had acquired 20 don't recall any situation like that. We may have had 21 the assets of CPI in 2006, and we would extrude the 21 multiple listings, but I don't recall losing a listing 22 tubing and then send it to E-BEAM Services. They would 22 and then -- it's such a long process. I mean, it -- it 23 E-BEAM it. It would come back to us, and we'd sell it. 23 takes a year or more to get a listing so you would never What he's talking about here is we -- what was lacking 24 24 do anything like that. It's a situation I doubt would 25 was our understanding, and so a large part of this 25 ever come up. Page 75 Page 77 1 1 project was to dig in a little bit deeper into the E-Q Did NIBCO ever make that switch from one 2 BEAM process so that we could understand it. And -- and 2 third-party certification entity to another because it 3 3 we did not know at the time if any variability was was concerned that it might lose the listing? 4 occurring, but we thought we might -- we probably ought 4 A Well, I don't know. I mean, in this report, 5 5 to check it out to see if there was any variability in obviously, one of the recommendations was to have a the process. And my understanding was at the end of 6 б listing with -- a dual listing with IAPMO, and it's not 7 7 this study, we determined that there was very little uncommon to have multiple listings for products. Indeed, 8 8 variation in their process. I think that, at one time, CPI Pipe had listings from, I 9 Q Okay. So to your understanding, when he's think, up to four different agencies, IAPMO and CSA, and 9 10 referring to product variation along with pipe axis and 10 I said, hey, so, you know, it's not uncommon in our 11 pipe circumference, he's wondering whether that's --11 industry to have multiple listings. It doesn't necessarily mean that you're concerned about losing 12 12 A He --13 something. But it's done for a number of different 13 Q -- occurring --14 A He --14 reasons. 15 -- rather than stating that it is occurring? 15 Q Yeah. And I understand that there may be 16 A He says it's a potential source of product 16 different reasons for certification, and you might be variation. He didn't say it was a source of product 17 listed with multiple agencies at the same time. 17 18 variation, but it was something that we needed to have a 18 A Uh-huh. 19 better understanding of to see if -- if it was 19 Q But specifically, did NIBCO ever switch from contributing to any variation in the product. 20 one third-party certifier to another because it was 20 Q And just to finish up with this document, will 21 21 concerned that it was going to lose that original 22 you turn to page 14? The last page in the document. And 22 listing? on this page there's a section 5, "Recommendation," and 23 23 A Well, I don't know. I think that -- I think 24 there's some bullet points. Do you see those bullet 24 that sometimes you add additional listings to spread out

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points?

some -- some risk that you might have with that.

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	Page 78		Page 80
1	Q Do you have recollection of a specific time	1	A Oh, yeah, yeah.
2	when NIBCO added an additional listing based on concern	2	Q Did you work with Alicia at all?
3	of losing one of the then current listings for a PEX	3	A I don't know if she was involved in this
4	product?	4	project that much. I think there was another fellow who
5	A No. All I've I don't know. In reading the	5	was more involved, as I recall.
6	report, I saw where David had recommended getting a	6	Q You just don't remember his name?
7	listing from IAPMO. I can't I'm sorry. I can't	7	A No.
8	remember if we actually did that or not. I know that	8	Q Are you aware that in 2009, Alicia Valentine
9	one time we had some discussions about that, but I'm not	9	was recommending to NIBCO that they that NIBCO hide
10	sure that we did that or not.	10	red pipe from NSF auditors if they came to the
11	Q In those discussions about the switch to	11	manufacturing facility?
12	IAPMO?	12	A No.
13	A Uh-huh.	13	Q Have you become aware of that since 2009?
14	Q Was any part of those discussions we might	14	A No.
15	lose our NSF listing, we should have a backup?	15	Q Is this the first you're hearing about it?
16	A Well, you know, I I think if you read the	16	A Yes.
17	report, David Bobo is kind of recommending that we get	17	Q If she was making that recommendation to NIBCO
18	an additional listing, and and I think in this case	18	at the time, is that something you should have been
19	he is talking about, like, an insurance policy. But	19	aware of as general manager of PEX products?
20	it's not uncommon, you know, to do this in our industry.	20	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
21	Q And saying I know you said throughout he's	21	A Can you something I should be aware of? I
22	making certain recommendations in the document, but	22	don't know. It's not something we would do. I know
23	setting that aside, separate from the document, did you	23	that, so and I don't think anyone under me was aware
24	have any discussions with Mr. Bobo or anyone at NIBCO	24	of that or or would ever do anything. We just
25	that adding IAPMO listing was a good idea because we	25	wouldn't do that.
	Page 79		Page 81
1	might lose the NSF listing?	1	Q Are you aware that Ms. Valentine provided a
2	A I do remember a meeting where we were talking	2	memo to David Bobo and to Ken McCoy in 2009 recommending
3	about his recommendation, and we did discuss his	3	that NIBCO hide red pipe from NSF auditors?
4	recommendation.	4	A No, I did not know that.
5	Q What was discussed at that meeting?	5	Q Mr. Bobo never brought that topic up with you?
6	A I don't remember. I just remember that we	6	A No.
7	talked about it, but I can't remember what decisions	7	Q And Mr. McCoy didn't either?
8	were made.	8	A No, I think I would have remembered that.
9	Q During your time at NIBCO well, what direct	9	Q Do you know what, if any, response anyone at
10	involvement have you had with personnel at Jana Labs?	10	NIBCO gave to Ms. Valentine about that recommendation?
11	A Well, I know I know some of the people	11	A No, I do not.
12	there and just really just meet seeing them at	12	Q What would you have done?
13	industry associations, like the Plastic Pipe Institute,	13	A I would have said, "We're not hiding pipe."
14	they would be at meetings. And you know, I had	14	Q Okay. But you're not aware of anyone else at
15	interactions with them, with the reformulation project	15	NIBCO that actually said that to her?
16	that Jana was involved with this, you know, I would be	16	A No, I don't recall.
17	involved in meetings, you know, when Jana gave us	17	Q And you said Jana personnel were also involved
18	reports on their progress.	18	in the reformulation project
19	Q Okay. Who do you recall, you know, having	19	A Yes.
20	interactions with at Jana? Do you remember the names of	20	Q that you worked with on some of the
21	any of the individuals?	21	project. What was your involvement with Jana on the
22	A No. Right now I don't recall the names of the	22	reformulation project?
23	folks.	23	A Very little. I mean, David Bobo was manager from the NIBCO side, and so he he interacted mostly
24	Q Do you remember somebody by the name of Alicia	24 25	•
25	Valentine?	⊿5	with the Jana people. I mean, periodically we'd have

Page 82 Page 84 updates by David, and then less frequently the Jana Q Okay. And then for the business management 1 1 2 people would come and give us an update. But that --2 team meetings that occurred about once a month, were 3 3 that was the extent of my contact. there technical people, aside from Debbie, in attendance 4 4 Q Okay. And during that same time period when at those meetings? A Yeah, like, David Bobo would attend that, Earl 5 the reformulation was occurring, was there also a 5 6 project to maintain the listings for the 1006 pipe? Sexton, Tom Coe. 6 7 7 A Yeah, yeah. I think that was part of it as Q Okay. So even though, you know, you had said 8 before that for certain things, including certification, 8 well. 9 Q Did you have any involvement in that aspect of 9 you rely on technical people or engineers to do that? 10 10 the project? A Yes. 11 A No involvement in it, no, other than just Q There was at least regular opportunities for 11 reports on how they were doing. 12 you to meet with those people and to discuss any issues 12 Q Similar to the reformulation people? 13 that were going on, right? 13 14 A Yes, yeah. And similar with the E-BEAM 14 A Yes. project as well. 15 So they if they had concerns about red and 15 16 Q When you were general manager for PEX, did you 16 orange pipe failing chlorine tests, they would have had 17 have regular meetings with the staff that was reporting 17 opportunities to bring that up to you during these to you? 18 meetings, right? 18 A Yes. 19 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 19 A It was not -- I mean, the maintenance of the Q How often did you have those meetings? 20 20 21 A Well, the plant people, our production manager 21 listings was -- was, you know, in the, you know, inside 22 and logistics people and the leadership team at the 22 our engineering department. It wasn't something that 23 plant, we'd meet three times a week. And then I would 23 was a regular topic that we talked about, you know, also meet with -- we had a kind of a market team. We 24 24 because they were entrusted with, you know, taking care 25 actually call them business management teams that met 25 of those matters. Page 85 1 1 once a month, and this was a cross-functional meeting Q Okay. So when you're in a meeting, the 2 2 where there'd be, you know, people from manufacturing listings and third-party certification wasn't at the top 3 3 and engineering and, you know, product managers, and of the pile? 4 we'd just kind of review the state of the business and 4 A It wasn't even an agenda item, no. David, 5 5 review financials and, you know, the projects that we during this process where we were doing these projects, 6 6 were working on. he might give a short update on how we were doing, but 7 7 Q Okay. So there's three times a week. Were that was the extent of that. We were -- we were 8 8 technical people involved in those meetings? involved in other matters. 9 9 A Well, our -- our quality manager Debbie Premus Q When you left NIBCO, to your knowledge, what attended those meetings, yes. 10 portion of NIBCO's business was PEX products? 10 11 Q Okay. Who else was in attendance at those 11 A Well, at the time that I left, -meetings? 12 12 Q Yes? 13 13 A Our -- our distribution manager, Donnie Α -- five percent. Five percent, okay. And had that number 14 Matchek, and manufacturing manager, and then we had a 14 15 secondary processing manager just who would cut the 15 changed over the years prior to that since you became 16 tubing, who would attend that meeting, our HR manager, 16 general manager? 17 and that's about it. We -- yeah, that -- that was the 17 A A little. Probably not a lot. 18 core of the team. 18 Q Okay. So let's say in, you know, 2008, do you 19 Q Okay. And Debbie Premus was the quality 19 know about what percent it would have been? 20 Maybe four percent. 20 control manager at that point, was that her title? 21 A Yes. 21 Q Okay. So there was -- over the period of that 22 Q But she was really the only kind of what we 22 period of time, there was some modest growth, let's say? refer as a technical person who attended those meetings? 23 23 A Yes. We -- you know, when we acquired the business the housing recession started, so -- and so 24 A Yeah, yeah. Most of the engineering resources 24



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were at our headquarters in Elkhart.

that impacted our sales. We were successful in taking

Page 86 Page 88 A Well, you know, I -- yeah. I mean, it was our 1 share from competitors. So we did have some growth 1 2 during that time period, but it's a small enough piece 2 hope that we continued to grow, yes. 3 of the overall NIBCO business that, you know, even if we 3 Q Did you believe that certain customers would were to grow by a lot, it wasn't going to change the 4 stop purchasing tubing from NIBCO if it didn't 4 5 5 percent of total NIBCO business number. reformulate? 6 б Q Okay. Did that part of the business grow more A No. No. Customers were, you know, still 7 in the last, let's say, two to three years you were at 7 buying from us, and there was probably a small subset 8 8 that, you know, wanted a higher recirculation value, but NIBCO? 9 9 A Well, it -- during my tenure there, I think it wasn't -- it wasn't going to cost us anything in the that in most years we did show some sales growth. There 10 10 short term. 11 may have been a couple of years where we took a step Q In that PEX pipe development strategy 11 back, but in most years, we were growing the business, 12 12 document, Exhibit 2 that we were looking at earlier, did 13 Mr. Bobo mention as part of the reason for the as I recall. 13 14 Q When did NIBCO first start selling the 3308 14 reformulation project that customers were asking for pipe? 15 better conformance for recirculation systems? 15 16 A I believe that was in 2013. I think it was in 16 A I think he did. 17 the fall of 2013, I -- I think. 17 Okay. Can you point me to that? 18 MR. KUHLMAN: Do you think it's faster if we 18 Q Okay. And around that time --19 A Yes. 19 take a break? Q -- when NIBCO began selling the 3308 pipe, did 20 MR. SHAMBERG: Sure. Yeah. Let's go off the 20 21 it continue to sell the 1006 pipe as well? 21 record. 22 A Yeah. I think that we probably -- I mean, we 22 (OFF THE RECORD) 23 didn't -- I'm sure that we had some stock in our 23 THE WITNESS: Okay. Well, I -- I didn't find inventory, and we sold that, yes. that exactly, but I think I was looking at the -- on 24 24 25 Q Okay. Did you have a timeframe of about how 25 page 15, the second bullet point provided more Page 87 Page 89 1 1 long that inventory was sold after the 3308 pipe? competitive product by achieving higher chlorine-2 A I don't know. I suppose after, you know, 2 resistant standards and, you know, the achievement 3 3 three months or so probably had depleted the 1006, I of the, you know, the recirculation is dependent 4 would think, you know. 4 upon that. So I was probably reading something into 5 5 Q Do you have any knowledge as to whether 1006 that. But other than -- I think that's what -- I 6 6 pipe is still available for purchase through retail mean, that's what we were all talking about, yes. 7 7 channels? BY MR. SHAMBERG: 8 8 Q In terms of making it a more --A I do not know. 9 9 Q How did the -- let's say over the first year A Yes. that the 3308 pipe was available in your market, how did 10 Q -- competitive product, that's the language 10 11 the sales of 3308 compare to the 1006 pipe? 11 you're referring to, right? A I think it was -- you know, I think we just 12 A Correct. 12 made the conversion, and there was no dramatic change Q And also, according to the document, achieving 13 13 14 one way or the other in our sales. 14 higher chlorine-resistance would ensure that NIBCO was 15 Q Okay. So did they -- were there any new 15 able to maintain third-party certifications as well, 16 customers that were obtained specifically because you 16 right? 17 had a new offering? 17 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 18 A I -- you know, I think that the -- the change 18 A Well, it -- again, it depends because we've 19 to reformulate, like I said earlier, it was a defensive 19 already shown that there's a difference between passing 20 marketplace issue. It's something that -- that you 20 tests and the chlorine resistance of -- of the tubing, needed to have, and so it wasn't, you know, it wasn't 21 21 you know, because of, you know, some of the controversy 22 going to have a dramatic impact on our sales one way or 22 in the data. 23 the other, at least -- at least initially. 23 Q So let me ask you about that. You've Q Did you believe that it eventually would have 24 mentioned a few times that there's controversy in the 24

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an impact on sales?

industry as to the validity of the data for the

Page 90 Page 92 1 Q Okay. What kinds of products? 1 chlorine-resistant testing. 2 2 A Well, I know that, like, with the industrial A Uh-huh. 3 3 Q Well, how has the industry voiced those plastics products that we sold, we had multiple 4 4 listings. We usually had a CSA and NSF listings. I concerns? 5 A Well, that -- that's a good question. I --5 think we always had at least two. And I think that, I 6 you know, we belong to industry associations, the know with plastic fittings, there's also multiple б 7 7 foremost one when it comes to PEX is the Plastic Pipe listings as well, so it's not -- it's not uncommon. 8 Institute, and there are technical committees that 8 Q Okay. And then when we talk about the reason 9 9 discuss these issues. And I mean, I -- I don't sit on for reformulating the pipe, you testified that it was 10 largely market driven in terms of maintaining or 10 those committees, but I know that they talk about these things all the time and, you know, they've all, you 11 creating a competitive product in the industry. How did 11 12 know, brought up, you know, their concerns with -- with 12 NIBCO make that determination that it needed to, you 13 testing protocols. You know, even the -- anyway, 13 know, improve the chlorine resistance in order to remain 14 there's just a lot of arguing among technical people for 14 competitive in the market? 15 testing standards, yes. 15 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 16 Q Who would be NIBCO's representative in that 16 A Well, with any of our products, we conduct a 17 discussion? 17 voice of the customer studies and we poll them on what, 18 A Well, you know, Mark Clark was part of our 18 you know, what they're looking for and what they need, 19 standards and codes team, and he was involved in those 19 is this important to them. Initially we -- a lot of 20 things and then, of course David Bobo is involved in 20 plumbers really weren't aware of the recirculation, you 21 those things. 21 know, ratings or standards. But then as time went by, 22 Q And has this debate been memorialized in any 22 there were more people putting recirculation systems in 23 way? In other words, so you mention the Plastic Pipe 23 their homes. A lot is spurred by water conservation Institute. Are there, you know, records at those 24 24 efforts. And so it was just something that we saw was 25 meetings that contain the discussions? 25 going to continue to grow, and so we wanted to have a Page 91 Page 93 1 A I don't -- I wouldn't -- I don't know. I 1 product that could address those needs. 2 don't know. But, you know, these were discussions. I 2 Q Okay. What -- you said part of it was polling 3 3 mean, we have discussions with Jana about it and others, customers. How was that done? 4 but I -- I know that they've taken place. 4 A Just one-on-one interviews with plumbers. 5 5 Q Did you have any discussions personally with Q Okay. Jana about the --6 6 A Plumbing contractors. 7 7 A No. Would you conduct those interviews, those 8 O -- standards? 8 discussions, personally? 9 9 A Sure, yes. A No, I didn't, no. 10 Q Okay. That would have been Mark Clark or 10 Q Were there ever any documents sent out to them 11 maybe David Bobo? 11 in terms of, you know, like, a written questionnaire or 12 A Correct. 12 anything? Q Are you aware of any papers that have been 13 13 A No, we just interviewed them. 14 published within the industry discussing the standards 14 Q About how many customers do you remember 15 and the --15 asking about this particular chlorine-resistance issue? 16 A I'm not aware -- I'm not aware of any. 16 A Well, when we did the original study, there 17 Q And before we go onto kind of a separate 17 weren't many people that were interested in it. But I 18 topic, there were a couple of things that you testified 18 think what it was -- it was more once -- once others in 19 earlier that I just wanted to follow up on a little bit. 19 the marketplace, competitors started promoting it, you 20 You had mentioned that it's not uncommon to maintain 20 know, we -- we needed to address that, yeah. 21 listings with more than one certification agency for the 21 Q Was -- the studies that you conducted with the 22 PEX products. Does NIBCO also maintain multiple listing 22 customers, were the results of those studies 23 for -- listings with certification in these for non-PEX 23 memorialized in writing? 24 products? 24 A Well, yeah, I -- I'm not -- yeah, I think that we -- we talked about it. I mean, that -- we -- yeah, 25 A Yes. 25

Page 96 Page 94 1 we did put together the -- you know, the feedback from 1 compensation or replacement of product, you know, 2 2 plumbers, yeah. whatever is required in that instance. If there's --3 3 Q Okay. Did you put that together, or was you know, if it's not -- if there's no manufacturing someone else assigned with that task of... 4 4 defect involved then, you know, a report is sent informing the end-user of that decision. 5 A I can't remember. I can't remember who did 5 б б Q Okay. So the information is essentially 7 7 Q Do you remember providing any of those limited to whether or not there was a manufacturing documents to your lawyers in this case -- NIBCO's 8 8 issue with the product? 9 lawyers in this case? 9 A That's the primary thing you're looking at, A No, it's not -- no. I mean, I don't even know 10 you know, when it's come in, you want to make sure it 10 11 wasn't, you know, you didn't have a defective product. if they exist anymore. 11 12 Q Does NIBCO have a system in place for tracking 12 Q And at that time, is it to protect NIBCO from customer complaints for its files? 13 13 potential liability, right? 14 A Yes. 14 A Well, I mean yeah. I mean they're -- usually Q Well, what's that system? 15 people send things in, and sometimes they feel that the 15 16 A It's called the PER process. I think it 16 product failed, or they may not know, and it just 17 stands for product evaluation report. 17 depends. It's on a case-by-case basis. Everything is Q Product evaluation report, okay. What's your 18 kind of different. 18 19 understanding of how that process works? 19 Q So these letters that you mentioned, are those A Well, if someone has an issue with one of our 20 ERLs, referred to as ERLs, the letters that are sent to 20 21 products typically, they or one of our salespeople will 21 the customer, or is that something else? 22 contact NIBCO. We have an 800 number with a technical 22 A Oh, the ERL. I'm not sure. 23 support staff, and they will take down as much 23 Q First, I'm going to you on the integers for information as they can about the problem, and then they 24 24 the pipe. Now, I'm going to you on what ERL stands for 25 will issue a PER number that is basically a tracking 25 A Yeah. Page 95 Page 97 number for that case, and then if there's a defective 1 1 Q But you mentioned -- regardless of -fitting or piece of pipe or a valve or whatever, it is 2 2 A Yeah. 3 3 sent back to NIBCO, and then we have a lab that will Q -- what they're referred to, you mentioned 4 evaluate the product and determine if it -- if it was a 4 that you hadn't really been involved in it. At some 5 manufacturing -- because of a manufacturing defect or 5 point, maybe in the last three years, you started 6 6 not. If it's not a manufacturing defect, they try to wanting to review those letters that went out to the 7 7 determine the root cause, you know, if they can. customers? 8 Q At the time you were general manager for PEX, 8 A Sure. 9 what involvement did you have in the PER process for PEX 9 Q Why did you make that change? 10 products? 10 A Oh, I just got more -- you know, more 11 A Well, I usually -- I -- I think in the 11 interested in it and wanted to see them. I -- I wanted beginning we just had a department that -- that was 12 12 -- I wanted to make sure that the -- I just want -- I handling these -- these issues, and then I would get 13 13 just wanted to have more visibility to it and, you know, 14 reports with -- with how many and what the cause was. 14 and then the responses back from our technical staff, I 15 And then I think -- I think probably the last few years 15 just kind of wanted to know what they were -- you know, 16 I was there, I -- I liked to actually see the reports, 16 what they were saying, what their evaluation was. 17 and so I had someone sending those to me so I could take 17 O Was there a particular impetus that made you a look at them. 18 18 more interested in those things at that time? 19 Q Okay. So how is the results of the internal 19 A Well, I think that, you know, we had seen 20 20 investigation communicated to the customer who initiated some, you know, issues in the field, and I just wanted 21 the complaint? 21 to have more visibility to it so I could get more 22 A Well, a letter -- a letter is sent to -- to 22 understanding. 23 the customer, and if it's -- you know, if it's a defect 23 Q What kind of issues are you -- did you see in 24 in the product and, you know, it's covered by warranty 24 the field? 25 then our technical people arrange, you know, 25 Well, what we saw was -- well, first of all,



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Page 98 1 you know, PEX tubing has replaced, you know, copper in 2 most residential applications, and it's a great product, 3 but, you have to install it correctly. And there are pressure limits on the product that you have to adhere 4 5 to, and so you know, as long as you follow the б manufacturer's recommendations, you know, you're not 7 going to have any issues. But we did see some -- some 8 cases in the field where the tubing had been mis-9 installed or was exposed to high water pressures that 10 over time might lead to a failure. And so I just wanted

to get closer to that and have a better understanding. O Were you able to gain a better understanding through being more involved in the process?

A Yeah, I think so. We -- you know, we got -we got better at investigating, you know, complaints and understanding. The product -- again, understand PEX is still a relatively new product, and I think that if you look at other products in the plumbing industry, you'll find this is a time period where it takes install -plumbers, installers, you know, to learn, you know, the proper -- proper methods and -- and things you need for that product to, you know, to be successful. So you know, that -- that was the motivation for it.

Q Aside from when NIBCO started selling PEXc products.

Page 100

- 1 the tubing had been exposed to high water pressure or
- 2 bent -- bent over our recommendation or sometimes gouged
- 3 by the installer either in storage or an installation. A
- 4 lot of cases where -- you know, one thing that's
- 5 different between copper and PEX tubing is that PEX
- 6 expands and contracts, and if you don't allow for
- 7 expansion contraction, that can lead to a failure if
- 8 it's placed in a tight area and not allowed to expand
- 9 and contract -- this is all in our installation manual,
- 10 but, you know, some plumbers don't follow the 11 guidelines, and then problems can ensue.
  - Q Okay. So you mentioned a few things there. Let's kind of parse it out. Start with pressure.
    - A Uh-huh.
  - Something you said, that if the pressure's too high, that can cause a failure in the pipe; is that
- 18 A Usually, pressure over time.
- 19 Q Okay. So in an instance when a customer sends 20 in a piece of tubing in relation to a PER, how does 21 NIBCO go about evaluating what the water pressure in 22 that application would have been at the time of failure?
  - A Well, there's -- there are some characteristics depending on the mode of the failure. There -- there have been cases where we've had tubing

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Page 101

A Uh-huh.

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- When were PEXc products first available in the United States market, tubing specifically?
- A I'm not sure, but I'm told that CPI might have been one of the -- well, they were the only PEXc manufacturer. I -- I don't know exactly when they started, but it was probably in the 1990s.
  - Q Okay. So maybe 20 years or so?
  - Α Now.
- 10 Q As we sit here today, somewhere --
- 11
- 12 Q -- around there. During the time that you were general manager for PEX products? 13
  - A Uh-huh.
  - Q For PERs that came in related to those PEX products, and specifically PEX tubing for the purposes of this question, what percentage of the time did NIBCO make the determination that field failure was due to a manufacturing defect?
  - A Well, it was a very small number. And if it was a manufacturing defect, it was -- it may have been caused by a die line where there may be a foreign object that gets in the die when you're extruding the tubing that causes a serration or stress point in the tubing, but those were pretty rare. And in almost all cases,

- where you can just tell that either a combination of the water temperature and the pressure of the water had -had caused a catastrophic failure. If it's -- if it's a small leak, you know, you really -- you can't tell what the pressure, temperature was by looking at the sample.
- Q Okay. And then you also mentioned the bending and if the tubing had been bent beyond the --
- A Excessive bending --
  - -- recommended bend radius. 0
- Α Yes.
- That would cause a failure, too. So in that same situation when a customer had sent in a sample of tubing in relation to a PER, how does NIBCO go about determining what the bend radius for that sample would have been at the time of failure?
- A Well, you know, sometimes we could tell by looking at the sample, and there -- there have been some cases where -- on some of these we send someone out to the site to take a look and see what -- how the installer has been installing the tubing. So in most cases we don't do an on-site inspection, but on some we do, you know.
- Q Is that the best way to evaluate whether improper installation contributed to the failure, to actually see how the installation was performed?



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Page 102

A Yeah, yeah. Oh, I think it's the best way, but sometimes by looking at the sample you can determine what the root cause is.

Q Other times you can't?

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A It depends on the length of the sample and if someone sends you a small piece -- you know, there's a lot of factors that go into determining, you know, what happened.

Q And what percentage of the time would you say -- strike that. For what percentage of PERs for PEX tubing did NIBCO send a representative out to actually view the installation?

A I don't know how many. I think it was probably no more than maybe 15 times a year, something like that. Dozen to 15.

Q In a situation that you described where NIBCO's examination of the sample that's sent in is inconclusive as to the cause of the failure, how does NIBCO respond to the customer in that instance?

A Well, I -- I think that in most case -there's two things here. We -- in most cases, the failure of the tubing is like an oxidating failure, and so we -- what we do is we -- when a sample comes in, we evaluate what the level of cross-linking has been. So the first thing we want to make sure is that we've got

requirements, and therefore, the cause of the failure must have been something other than the pipe, the way it was manufactured, right?

Page 104

Page 105

A Uh-huh.

Q So if the investigation into a sample revealed that the pipe did not meet a particular requirement, an ASTM standard, at the time that it left the facility, would you consider that to be a product defect?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A Well, that's kind of a hypothetical situation. The -- I mean, I -- first, we -- we don't typically ship products that, you know, we don't think, you know, are ready to be sold.

Q What if the product that was sold had failed the F 2023 chlorine testing, would that be a product

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A No. No. All the products we sold had listings and met -- met the requirements. A failure of a test, when you're evaluating different materials and reformulations and things like that, doesn't mean your product is bad. It just means that it's in the process of getting that listing, you know, there -- you know, there may have been an issue with the test, but a test, in the process against a standard doesn't mean what

Page 103

good cross-linking. We also want to check the dimensions of the tubing to make sure, you know, there wasn't a thin wall or anything like that. So we usually always know, in most cases, why it failed, but sometimes you don't know what were the factors that contribute to it. All we can determine is that there was nothing -that the tubing itself, you know, met the requirements of the product, and then we would sometimes send a field person or representative out to investigate it, you know, if -- if the root cause wasn't, you know, readily apparent.

Q You mentioned NIBCO's able to determine whether the pipe met the applicable requirements, at least at the time it met the manufacturing facility?

A Uh-huh.

Q Would you consider -- if a PEXc product didn't meet those requirements at the time that it left the manufacturing facility, would you consider that to be a product defect?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A I don't understand the question. Do you mean when it left or what?

Q Well, you were saying getting to the cause of the failure, and you said if you can determine at the time it left the facility it met the applicable

you're shipping is bad.

Q As long as you got the certification on there, it's okay?

A Yeah. Well, you -- you want to meet the standards, and that's typically what we -- what we do.

Q And you also mentioned there's a test that can be performed to determine the degree of cross-linking?

A Uh-huh.

Q Has NIBCO ever determined that the root cause of PEXc tubing failure was insufficient cross-linking?

A I think it -- I think there may have been one that I saw during that time period.

Q Okay. Do you remember the circumstances?

A No, I don't remember the details of it, but I mean, we -- I think that we accepted responsibility for it. I don't remember all the detail, who it was, or anything, but we accepted responsibility for it.

Q When NIBCO communicates with the customer about the outcome of their PER investigation, the ERL or whatever letter is sent to the customer, does NIBCO identify the root cause of the failure to the customer?

A Sometimes, yes.

How is -- why sometimes?

A Well, if -- you know, if they send a long piece of tubing and if it's obvious that they've --



Page 106 Page 108 1 they've over-bent it, you know, sometimes it's been so 1 Q Okay. So they sell the product and get a 2 2 far that it's kinked, that's an easy call, you know, so commission --3 we -- we can make those, you know. If there's an 3 A They sell the product. 4 4 oxidated failure, you know, it could be -- I mean, even Q -- from the sale? 5 those can be a kink or it could be too high water 5 A Yeah. 6 б pressure, too much water pressure over time. If there's Q And in your e-mail, you're actually -- as we 7 7 an obvious -- I think that our technical staff, if were talking about there, you were asking whether you 8 there's been like a puncture or a gouge, you know, that 8 can give the customer a little bit more information 9 they can usually tell by examining the material, like, 9 specifically about the root cause of the failure, right? under a microscope, so -- so there's some things they 10 10 A Yes. 11 can determine and sometimes, you know, they can't. It 11 Q Okay. And then that same day Ken McCoy 12 12 just depends. responds to you, and Ken is the technical services 13 Q Have there been instances where NIBCO has been 13 manager; is that right, at this time? 14 able to determine the root cause of a failure but has 14 A Yes. nevertheless not -- chosen not to communicate that root 15 Q Okay. So he was dealing with the customer 15 16 cause to the customer? communications related to the PER, right? 16 17 A Like, when we -- are you referring to when we 17 A Uh-huh. 18 make a -- like, an on-site visit or... Q Okay. And so he says, "Randy, these reports 18 19 Q In any situation where NIBCO has conducted an 19 are purposely kept minimal for a host of reasons, not 20 investigation -least of which to protect ourselves from a legal 20 21 A No, if we --21 standpoint. This is done so we can limit and control 22 -- and not responded to the customer? 22 the official answers that might go public." Do you 23 A No. If we know, if we have a good idea what 23 think what Ken is saying right there is accurate? the root cause is, you know, we're going to tell the 24 A Well, what he's saying, I don't even know if 24 25 customer what happened, what caused this, because we it's accurate. I think at the time, you got to 25 Page 107 Page 109 1 1 don't want them to do it again. understand this was in 2008, relatively new to the PEX 2 2 Q Is that true even if the determination is that business. We've only been in it two years. And so when 3 3 the root cause is a manufacturing defect? we did evaluate these -- these issues, we -- we did not 4 A Well, like I said, yeah, if -- if there's 4 have some of the tools that we needed to, you know, dig 5 5 something that we've done, you know, in the manufacturer into it deeper. So this time, 2008, yes, I think his of the product, then typically we accept responsibility. 6 б statement is kind of where we were at back then. But as 7 7 Q Typically? Are there any instances where time went on, we got a little bit better at 8 8 NIBCO doesn't accept responsibility under those investigating things, I think. 9 9 circumstances? Q Okay. At some point, did NIBCO begin 10 10 providing more details to customers regarding the causes A No. 11 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 11 of the failures? Q Okay. I'm going to ask you about one more 12 A Yes. 12 document. 13 13 Q Okay. Around when? Was it an organic 14 (EXHIBIT 3 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) 14 problem? 15 A Thank you. Okay. 15 A Well, I think that around -- probably around 16 Q Okay. So this is Exhibit 3 that I'm showing 16 2012 or so, you know, we started -- we started doing more site visits with things like this. But I mean, Ken you. This is an e-mail chain relating to a specific 17 17 18 customer PER; is that right? 18 in his response, he's correct. A lot of times the lab, 19 A Yes. 19 they can -- they can tell you what the failure is but 20 they don't have enough information to tell you what 20 Q Okay. And if we look at the e-mail that you 21 sent to Ken McCoy, Debbie Premus, and CCing someone 21 influences this. And as you read this, there's a number 22 named John Wood on September 22, 2008. First of all, 22 of possible suspects, tubing being too close to a water who's John Wood? 23 23 heater, no water pressure relief valve. You know, we 24 A John Wood is a salesman for Sunbelt Marketing, 24 don't know what the water pressure was it was exposed

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and they are an agent for NIBCO, a selling agent.

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to. So as time went on, Kyle, we got better as

Page 110

investigating these -- these kind of things.

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- Q Okay. And you said in 2012, part of that improvement in investigation was doing some more site visits?
- A Yeah. We did -- we did more site visits, and then we made some investments in -- in instrumentation to help us.
- Q Okay. So first of all, with the site visits, about roughly how many site visits related to PEX products did NIBCO perform then in 2012?
- A Well, I don't -- I don't remember. I just don't remember how many we were doing then.
- Q Okay. Let's put it this way, maybe it's easier. In 2012, for all the PERs that were generated relating to PEX tubing, what percentage of those PERs did NIBCO perform a site visit?
- A I don't -- a small percentage. I just don't remember.
- Q So it didn't become, say, the standard practice?
- A No. And -- and even -- even when I left, it wasn't a standard practice to go out every -- every time. But if -- certainly if it was requested by a plumbing contractor or a homeowner or one of our salespeople, we would make every effort to do it.

Page 111

Q You also mentioned some new instrumentation. What new instrumentation did NIBCO obtain to help in this evaluation process?

A Well, we -- we purchased a pressure gauge that has a data logger on it, and we would leave the pressure gauge on the house for two to three days, sometimes four, and it would evaluate what the water pressure is over -- over that time period, you know. It can tell if there's been spikes in water pressure, what the average water pressure is. We also, just in the course of going out and visiting installations, you know, we got better at -- at noticing common mistakes that plumbers do, like, bending it too much or not allowing for expansion and contraction. We also purchased a pyrometer. A pyrometer is an instrument that uses infra-red to -- to measure the temperature of -- of an object. In this case we're checking the temperature of the water coming out of the water heater, make sure the water heater wasn't set too high. So those are some of the things. And then we would also check -- we had instruments that would allow us to evaluate the chlorine concentration in the water and other water qualities.

Q Okay. So these instruments that you mentioned a few, the pressure gauge, the pyrometer and then an instrument to measure the chlorine level --

A Yeah, yeah.

Q -- of the water. So these would have all been used, though, when NIBCO was doing an actual site inspection of the --

A Well, we probably didn't start doing that until it was after 2012, probably more like 20 -- maybe 2013 is when we started doing that --

Q But you still --

A -- in earnest.

Q I'm sorry. I didn't mean to cut off the last part of your question. But you're using these instruments when someone from NIBCO is doing a site inspection, correct? In other words, you're not using the pyrometer, the pressure gauge when, you know, Debbie Premus is evaluating a piece of pipe in Lebanon?

A No. Oh, no, no, because that -- that is -- these are all things that you have to use at the site where the product's being used. It wouldn't help you at all in the evaluation at the lab.

Q Okay. And for the PERs that were being generated in 2012, 2013, that timeframe for PEX products, I think you said it was still, you know, a relatively small fraction of the PERs where a site visit was occurring, correct?

A I believe so. I just don't remember. But I

Page 113

Page 112

don't -- I really don't remember how -- how many, what percent we were going out to investigate.

Q Well, okay. So --

A But there's one, you know, Tom Coe would do these inspections, and there's a limit to how many times he could go. And so I'm thinking it was, you know, that no more than, you know, 12 to 18 in a year or so.

Q Okay. So regardless of what the exact numbers were --

A Sure.

Q Let's say for the PERs where an evaluation was made without a site inspection, how was NIBCO able to provide more detail to the customer than it was able to provide in 2008 when this e-mail was written?

A Without an inspection?

Q Yeah. And the reason I ask is you -- when we were talking about what Ken was saying in the e-mail, you said, you know, at this point it's true, but then in subsequent years we developed, you know, better ways to determine the causes and more things we could do. And it was the site inspections and then also, instrumentation that related to the site inspection. So I'm wondering aside from when a site inspection occurred, when it didn't occur how was NIBCO able to provide more detail to the customer?



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Page 114

A Well, I don't think there was much of a change there in the report that our technical services people sent, because, again, they're just looking at, you know, the piece itself. There may have been some incremental improvements just because you've now been looking at this for, you know, going on eight years or so and you get a little bit better at it. But, I think that without a site visit, you can't really comment too much on what you think the root cause is, because you don't know.

Q Okay. So for a customer who has a PEX tubing failure, where no site visit occurs, and the evaluation of the claim is done solely in Lebanon facility, let's say?

A Uh-huh.

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Q And then that customer received a letter from NIBCO with the result of its investigation. In that instance, how would that letter that NIBCO sends have been different in 2008 versus 2013?

A Well, I -- I don't know exactly how it would be different, but I -- I do know that we got better at -- okay. An example is that early on, if people had an issue with a piece of PEX tubing, it was not uncommon for them to send us a piece as long as this pad, you know, about six inches. And as time went by, you know,

Page 116

Q So an oxidated failure could be due to over pressurization or temperature being too high in the water, right?

A That, yeah, or -- or a -- or if the tubing has been stressed in some way that it compromised it to allow it to be attacked, it could be because of that as

Q Could an oxidated failure also result from a manufacturing defect?

A It's possible, but pretty rare.

Q Okay. Which is in theoretical sense?

A Yeah. Like, if for some reason -- like, if we had forgotten to send a reel to E-BEAM Services and sent it out -- that -- that never happened. I don't think we ever sent any tubing out that wasn't cross-linked, but to answer your question, that is an example where that could have occurred.

Q So the fact that an oxidative failure occurred could be due to field conditions, or it could be due to a manufacturing defect depending on the specific circumstances in that case, right?

A Yes.

Q Regardless of NIBCO's ability to provide more detail based on some of the improvements that you mentioned in 2013, did NIBCO still have an interest in

Page 115

we asked them to send a longer piece, so that if there 2 were some clues, if there was some gouging or something 3 had happened to the tubing, we'd be in a better position to do that. So I think there were probably some improvement over 2008 without a site inspection, but --

but, you know probably not appreciable, you know, increase in information, only because you just don't

8 know.

Q Okay. So the, I guess, level of detail in the report --

A Yeah.

Q -- in those instances would have been pretty similar?

A I mean, most of the -- when tubing fails and, you know, I'm sure you've looked at these reports. In most cases, it is an oxidative-type failure. That is, if PEX tubing's been exposed to high water pressure or exposed to a chemical in the water or too high a chlorine levels, it's usually going to result in an oxidated failure.

Q And is it true that an oxidated failure is a -- it's a failure mechanism rather than a cause of failure?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A I guess I don't understand the question.

Page 117

keeping the information it was sharing with customers minimal to protect NIBCO from a legal standpoint?

A Well, I think that we wanted to be -- we want to be accurate in our assessment, and we -- we did start to put in possible causes and in reaction to, you know, this kind of issue where we put in a statement where we recommended that customers check to see if their pressure relief valve was working, did they have an expansion tank installed in their home. So I'm sorry, I've been away from the business for two years. A lot of these things are coming to me. We did start adding some language to give the homeowner or the plumber some -- some possible avenues to look at.

Q Do you recall any instances where the possible causes that were shared with the homeowner included a manufacturing defect?

A No, unless there was a -- no, I can't, you know, other than, you know, we did talk about that there -- there was a sample that the cross-linking was lower. Now, we don't know if that caused that failure or not, but we assumed responsibility for that. And if -- if we -- there may have been some cases where we felt like if there was a die line in the tubing that I talked about earlier -- yeah, if there was a manufacturing defect, we would, you know, take responsibility for it.

	Page 118		Page 120
1	Q Is there any one at NIBCO responsible for	1	wouldn't be an evaluation as to what the cause of the
2	tracking trends in PERs?	2	failure was, because
3	A Yeah. Debbie Premus tracks trends.	3	A Yeah.
4	Q Okay. With respect to PEX products	4	Q it never occurred, correct?
5	specifically when you were the GM, would she apprise you	5	A That probably does not happen very often.
6	of those trends as they related to the PEX products?	6	Q And obviously, if someone has an issue of
7	A Oh, yeah. I got a monthly report.	7	failure of NIBCO PEX tubing and then does not contact
8	Q So what did that monthly report contain?	8	NIBCO and simply has you know, brings a plumber out
9	A Just it was like a Pareto chart. It had, you	9	and has them replace the tubing, NIBCO's not going to
10	know, the number of PERs we received and what the	10	have a PER for that, right?
11	disposition was and how many of this type and, you know,	11	A Correct.
12	different, you know, causes.	12	Q In 2006 when customers sent in failed
13	Q Okay. Do you recall, sitting here, any trend	13	returned failed samples to NIBCO for PEX tubing, where
14	that appeared in the PERs relating to PEX tubing at that	14	did those samples go?
15	time?	15	A Well, I think that at the time they were I
16	A No. It kind of varied from, you know, year to	16	think that we had them sending tubing to the plant. And
17	year. You know, most PEX failures, regardless of the	17	everything else, like, fittings and other products, were
18	root cause, are oxidative failures, so there were always	18	going to our lab in Elkhart, Indiana.
19	a lot of those, then, you know, sprinkled in with some,	19	Q So the tubing was the only PEX product that
20	you know, obvious, you know, mis-installation of the	20	was being evaluated in Lebanon at that point?
21	product or, you know, things like I I I don't	21	A Correct.
22	remember, you know, all the specifics of those reports,	22	Q Why was that the case? Why were, say, PEX
23	or and I don't think there was any particular one	23	fittings going to Elkhart but the PEX tubing was going
24	that was growing or declining, you know, as far as a	24	to Lebanon?
25	trend.	25	A Well, we've been in the metal fittings
	Page 119		Page 121
1	Q Was there any way that NIBCO tracked customer	1	business for a long time, and the the metal PEX
2	complaints outside of the PER process itself?	2	fittings that we sell are a source product, so we just
3	A I would I'm not aware.	3	felt like we had better technical people in Elkhart to
4	Q Okay. So at least in your capacity, your only	4	evaluate metal fittings than than a plastics plant.
5	exposure to warranty claims or customers' complaints was	5	Q And then at some point in time, did the PEX
6	through PERs?	6	tubing samples also start going to Elkhart?
7	A Yes. Correct. And all the other NIBCO	7	A Yes.
8	products go through the same process, of course.	8	Q About when?
9	Q So it's not exclusive to PEX?	9	A Probably around 2012 or so, if I'm to guess.
10	A Correct.	10	Q Why was that change made?
11	Q And in order for a PER to be initiated, the	11	A Well, I'm not exactly sure. I know our
12	customer has to contact NIBCO and then send in an	12	engineering department made that made that decision,
13		13	and I'm not exactly sure why, but I I think just to
	example of the defective product, right?		
14	A Yes.	14	I think that all in almost all cases, other NIBCO
15	A Yes. Q Okay. So if a customer decides not to send a	14 15	I think that all in almost all cases, other NIBCO products all go to Elkhart for evaluation, so I think
15 16	A Yes. Q Okay. So if a customer decides not to send a sample in, doesn't want to, isn't able to, whatever it	14 15 16	I think that all in almost all cases, other NIBCO products all go to Elkhart for evaluation, so I think they I think that early on, you got to understand
15 16 17	A Yes. Q Okay. So if a customer decides not to send a sample in, doesn't want to, isn't able to, whatever it is, would a PER still be initiated for that complaint?	14 15 16 17	I think that all in almost all cases, other NIBCO products all go to Elkhart for evaluation, so I think they I think that early on, you got to understand when we acquired the assets of CPI, a lot of the
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15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	A Yes. Q Okay. So if a customer decides not to send a sample in, doesn't want to, isn't able to, whatever it is, would a PER still be initiated for that complaint? A Well, that's a good question, and I'm I'm sure there are times where we've issued someone's called, we've given a PER number, which is basically a tracking number, and they never sent anything in. But I'm sure that has happened. Q Okay.	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	I think that all in almost all cases, other NIBCO products all go to Elkhart for evaluation, so I think they I think that early on, you got to understand when we acquired the assets of CPI, a lot of the technical people up in our lab in Elkhart didn't know much about PEX, and as time went by, they their skill level increased, and I think we got to a point where we felt like, you know, we ought to have those people understand plastics or PEX tubing, at least, and they they are competent enough to evaluate it.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A Yes. Q Okay. So if a customer decides not to send a sample in, doesn't want to, isn't able to, whatever it is, would a PER still be initiated for that complaint? A Well, that's a good question, and I'm I'm sure there are times where we've issued someone's called, we've given a PER number, which is basically a tracking number, and they never sent anything in. But I'm sure that has happened.	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	I think that all in almost all cases, other NIBCO products all go to Elkhart for evaluation, so I think they I think that early on, you got to understand when we acquired the assets of CPI, a lot of the technical people up in our lab in Elkhart didn't know much about PEX, and as time went by, they their skill level increased, and I think we got to a point where we felt like, you know, we ought to have those people understand plastics or PEX tubing, at least, and they

Page 122 Page 124 would usually either have an NSF or IAPMO listing and 1 regarding the failure mechanisms of PEX tubing? 1 2 A Well, I think -- I think that Debbie Premus, 2 then a CSA listing, you know, for Canadian standards. 3 3 certainly from looking at the product, and then we had Q Okay. Outside of PEX, with respect to other 4 4 one other polymer chemist, Earl Sexton, was very good at NIBCO products, are there examples of products where NIBCO's maintaining multiple listings concurrently 5 looking at the product. The best person for going to a 6 б site and seeing the installation and evaluating whether, within the United States market? 7 7 you know, the pressure relief valve is working or not or A Well, you know, I think that with -- I think was -- is Tom Coe. That kind of became his area of 8 often with -- I'm trying to think with plastic fittings 8 9 9 expertise. if we -- if we did or not. I think with the industrial 10 10 Q So then what -- is Earl Sexton in Elkhart? products we have multiple listings, but I'm not -- you 11 know, I just don't remember, Kyle. A Yes. 11 12 12 So when that change was made and the samples O Okay. started going to Elkhart instead of Lebanon, does that 13 13 A Sorry. 14 mean that Earl started analyzing them instead of Debbie 14 Q So with respect to products being sold in the 15 15 United States market, you can't think of any specific or... 16 16 products where NIBCO maintains multiple listings --A You know, I'm not sure if Earl was evaluating A Yeah. 17 them or not. We have other people there. I don't know, 17 to tell you the truth. 18 -- in the United States --18 19 Q Okay. But at least as of the switch to 19 A I know that we have multiple listings with 20 Elkhart, Debbie Premus was no longer evaluating the 20 most products, but whether there's two for the United 21 failed return samples, right? 21 States or three, you know, I don't know. 22 A Correct. 22 Q Okay. Not one off the top of your head --23 Q To your knowledge, did the evaluation process 23 A No. change at all when, you know, it moved from Lebanon to 24 24 0 -- that you can think of, at least? 25 Elkhart for PEX tubing? 25 No, uh-uh. Α Page 123 Page 125 1 1 A No. Q We also talked about the report that was 2 2 authored by David Bobo back in 2009? Q So is it conducted in the same way, the 3 3 investigation, just in a different place? 4 A Correct. 4 Regarding the pipe development strategy? Q 5 5 MR. KUHLMAN: We getting close to lunch. Α 6 б MR. SHAMBERG: Yeah. Q What step -- so that report was circulated, 7 7 MR. KULHMAN: Want to go to 11:30? you read the report at the time, right? 8 MR. SHAMBERG: Now's a good time. I'm going to 8 go to something else. Let's go off. 9 Q Do you know who else within NIBCO that report 9 10 (OFF THE RECORD) 10 would have been circulated to? 11 BY MR. SHAMBERG: 11 A Well, Gary Wilson was David Bobo's boss, so --12 Q Okay. So Randy, before we go onto some and I specifically remember Gary being at a meeting, so 12 additional topics, there were just a few things we 13 13 the only ones that for sure that I know, well, I can discussed before the lunch break that I wanted to follow 14 14 remember, you know, having -- when Jana came and gave us 15 up on and get some clarification. One of the things 15 a proposal and then David wrote his recommendation, the 16 that we were talking about is the maintenance of 16 only people for sure that would have been in there would 17 17 multiple listings for the NIBCO product, and the fact be David, Gary, and myself. There might have been some 18 that maintaining multiple listings isn't exclusive to 18 others, but I can't remember. 19 PEX products at NIBCO; do you recall that testimony? 19 Q What action did NIBCO take in response to that 20 20 A Yes. Bobo report, if any? 21 21 Q And I believe you used an example for an A Well, we started working on the reformulation 22 industrial plastics product that was maintained in 22 of PEXc, and we -- we did start the project to look at 23 multiple listings. Can you remind me of what those 23 the E-BEAM process, and we hired at least one or two 24 24 experts to help us understand it better. And those were listings were in that example you used? 25 A Well, I -- I know that with those products, we 25 the -- were the main -- the main things that we did.

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Page 126

Q What knowledge did NIBCO gain about the E-BEAM process from those experts who were retained?

A Well, you know, I don't remember the last report, but what we learned was that the process was -- it was very closely controlled, that there was very little variability in the E-BEAM process. And so we came away with -- you know, it answers those questions that we had, and we felt a lot more confident about it, you know. Not -- I mean, there was no reason to not be confident, but we felt confident after we knew, because before we just didn't -- had no basis of knowing. We were basically, you know, going on E-BEAM's, you know, recommendations of what, you know, what was the best practice.

Q Do you know whether there are industry standards that cover the degree of cross-linking that's necessary for PEXc tubing?

A Well, yeah, yeah. And I don't know which standard it is, but there -- I think it's -- it has to have a minimum of like 88 -- it would be 82 to 88 percent cross-linking. But that -- that governs all PEX, regardless of A, B, and C, so there's a minimum cross-linking that you have to achieve.

Q Okay. Do you know about where in that range NIBCO's gel content historically fell?

126 Page 128

Q And we also discussed kind of the process when no site visit occurs, the process that NIBCO uses to determine what the cause of a particular failure is?

A Yes.

Q When NIBCO makes the determinations that improper installation was the cause of a particular failure when no site visit has occurred, what criteria does NIBCO use to reach that conclusion?

A Well, it would -- I don't think there were a lot where that occurred, because I think most times there wasn't enough evidence to determine what -- what the root cause was. We could only speculate on certain things and give the homeowner and end-user some -- and plumbers some guidelines on what the possible suspects were and what to look for. But I think that if -- you know, certainly if there was some gouging of the material, you know, we try to have people submit as long of a sample as they could so that we could take a look at the full piece, and then sometimes that revealed things that may have occurred.

Q Was there a particular criteria that NIBCO used to determine whether installation, improper installation caused an oxidative-type failure, to your knowledge?

A Well, no specific criteria, but I -- I think

Page 127

A Well, I think it -- I think it was in the -- I mean, it was above the minimum. I don't -- I think that we were -- I can't remember how much above the minimum we were, but it was probably, like, maybe 25 percent above the minimum.

Q 25 percent? I just want to understand that. I think you had said that your understanding was something like 82 to 88 percent?

A Well, you know, again, I really don't remember. I'd say that if it was -- well, I just don't remember, to tell you the truth. But I think that we were -- you know, we were above the minimum, but it wasn't like if it was 85, I don't think we were at 100. If it was 85, we were, like, around 90 or so, something like that.

Q You were comfortable with the --

A Yes.

Q -- gel content level of the PEXc tubing?

19 A Oh, absolutely. Yeah.

Q We also talked a little bit about the PER evaluation process and the fact that site visits

sometimes occur and sometimes don't?

A Yes.

Q Remember talking about that?

25 A Uh-huh.

Page 129

that I do recall sometimes where by looking at the tubing, if it had been overbent, depending on where the failure took place and if it was on a bend, you know, we could narrow it down to something like that. But if --with most of the oxidative-type failures, if they were caused by a water condition or a pressure condition or a temperature condition, there really isn't any way the lab can determine that just by looking at a piece of plastic, you know.

Q And then the last thing that I wanted to go back to is we talked about the transition from field returned samples going to Lebanon and then to Elkhart around 2012?

A Yes.

Q And you had said that by 2012 when that transition occurred, the analysts in Elkhart had gotten a little bit more familiar with the product and a little bit more seasoned in doing that failure analysis; is that fair?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A Well, I think that they -- I think that was maybe part of it. And I think also, it was just an effort on our part to be standard -- standard procedure across all of the company.

Q Okay. To the extent that the analysts in

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	Page 130		Page 132			
1	Elkhart had gained some experience, how had they gained	1	resistance of anyone in the industry. And then that			
2	that experience prior to 2012?	2	last integer, which is actually 08 is the hydrostatic			
3	A Uh-huh. Well, you know, I think sometime I	3	pressure. And so we were the discussions we were			
4	think that they had a collaborative relationship with	4	having is that if we needed to have a 5, a 100 percent			
5	Debbie and then, you know, sometimes Debbie would look	5	re-cir product, what would be the different options to			
6	at a piece and be you know, be kind of say, "I	6	achieve that. And so one is to switch to PEXb from the			
7	don't know if I understand this. Maybe I ought to have	7	was it Silone or Sayco, one of the two yeah, Sayco			
8	someone else take a look at it," and she'd send samples	8	or the Lyondell material from Europe or to reformulate			
9	up to Elkhart or Rural Sexton or someone else would look	9	PEXc. So this was just exploring options. And this is			
10	at it. So I think it was through that kind of	10	all contingency planning if if suddenly, you know,			
11	collaborative efforts that they they, you know, gain	11	you had to have the 5.			
12	that expertise.	12	Q Okay.			
13	Q Okay. So I want to ask you about another	13	A 100 percent re-cir.			
14	document.	14	Q These different options, the three options in			
15	(EXHIBIT 4 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)	15	this document are different approaches to achieve that 5			
16	A Thank you. Okay.	16	rating			
17	Q So first question is: Have you ever seen this	17	A Yes.			
18	document before?	18	Q for that first number?			
19	A You know, I'm familiar with all these issues,	19	A Yeah.			
20	but I don't know if I saw this document. I don't know	20	Q Was the PEX was one of these options			
21	who the author of the document is.	21	ultimately implemented?			
22	Q That was going to be my next question: Who	22	A We actually tried option 1, and we sold that			
23	wrote it?	23	product for at least a year, but we I guess since			
24	A Yeah. I I don't know. It's not me.	24	I've left, they've stopped selling this particular			
25	Q But these were at least topics that you recall	25	product.			
	Page 131		Page 133			
1	having been discussed at NIBCO?	1	Q Okay. And do you know why they stopped			
2	A Yeah.	2	selling the product?			
3	Q And would the discussion have been around this	3	A Well, I think that, you know, we had a steam -			
4	time that the document is dated, October of 2012?	4	- you know, in the in the description here it talks			
5	A Yes.	5	about a steam chamber. We had a steam chamber made. We			
6	Q Okay. So I want to ask about this option 2	6	made a fairly good investment in that, and the steam			
7	here on the first page to reformulate the PEXc?	7	chamber just wasn't delivering the kind of cross-			
8	A Yeah.	8	linking at the plant that we wanted to see, and I think			
9	Q So the document seems to be recognizing that	9	and I've been away from NIBCO, so I don't know all			
10	the reformulation project that we've been discussing has	10	the details of this, but I think we just said, you know,			
11	already occurred and that the 3308-graded product is	11	we can either continue to work on this and struggle with			
12	being produced, but it seems to be discussing	12	it, or we can just go back to what we know, and so I			
13	potentially another reformulation?	13	think they decided to go back to what they know.			
14	A Yes.	14	Q Was option 2 ever implemented?			
15	Q Is that something that NIBCO was discussing	15	A No.			
16	internally at this point?	16	Q Why not?			
17	A Yes.	17	A Not exactly you know, I think that we felt			
18	Q Okay. And what were the reasons for	18	like we had a good product. You know, we had a very			
19	considering another reformulation of the product?	19	high UV resistance, higher than anyone else. We had the			
20	A Well, you know, this is all coming back to me	20	best hydrostatic resistance of any competitive product,			
21	now. That first number involves the the	21	so I guess this is my feeling at the time, maybe not			
22 23	recirculation standard, so we started with a 1. We had	22 23	others. My feeling was this is a pretty good product, and I don't think we really need the 5, and we can			
		7.3	and Loon Lining we really need the 3, and we can			
	a 3, which is 50 percent re-cir and the 5 is 100 percent		-			
24 25	re-cir. The second number, the 3, is the UV resistance. And we had, at this point, I think we had the highest UV	24 25	certainly sell these other features that other people don't have. But then, you know, there was still some			

Page 134

demand for the 5 product, and so you know, we thought that by becoming also a PEXb manufacturer in addition to a PEXc, that would give us a real competitive -- an edge over our competitors.

Q Is NIBCO 1006 tubing appropriate for use in a continuous recirculation systems?

A Yeah. And it's been used. You got to remember, early on everyone was at 1006, and it was being used all the time. Not just our tubing, but tubing of other companies, Lewknor, Viega, Zurn was all being used in recirculation systems. But we -- we've always recommended that if you put a recirculation -- 100 percent recirculation system in your home, that you add a timer and probably -- and try to recirculate it 25 percent of the time, because it's very energy efficient to be reheating water 100 percent of the time just so you can have hot water, you know, when you get up in the morning. So you know, we -- we just think it's kind -- it's kind of overkill, and so that's always been our recommendation.

Q So the 1 that started those integers, the 1 in the 1006?

23 A Yes.

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Q I believe you said indicates that the product is appropriate for use in a recirculation system where

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that we -- we got to a point where we talked more about
it, but I don't know exactly when. You know, it was
probably in that 2010, 2012 timeframe, something like
that.

Q So prior to 2010 and 2012 if a customer came to NIBCO and said, "I've got a plumbing system that's set up for 100 percent continuous recirculation. Can I use your 1006 pipe in my system," what would you have said?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A Well, it depends on the -- you know, I think that the -- I'm trying to remember when we came up with the 1, 3, and 5. But prior to having the have 1, 3, and 5, I think that we -- well, you know, I just don't -- I just don't really remember. I think that we've always recommended that you should only recirculate water in a system 25 percent of the time because of the energy efficiency. It's just -- it's just so wasteful to heat water, you know, 24 hours a day in a tubing system. It just makes no sense when you're only in the shower in the morning and maybe in the evening, you know.

(EXHIBIT 5 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

23 A Thank you. Okay.

Q Okay. So this is a document that's titled "DURA-PEX Chlorine Resistance Performance Q&A" dated

Page 135

it's 25 percent hot water?

A Yes.

3 Q -- recirculating?

A Yes.

Q So is the 1-rated pipe appropriate for use is a system where hot water is needed to circulate 50 percent of the time?

A Well, I think, you know, the standards have evolved over the -- over time, and so like, you know, I think that today, if you've got a 5, if you're going to have a 100 percent re-cir system. You probably ought to use something that has the 5, and if it's 50 percent use, a 3. And if it's 1, you probably have a 25 percent. But at the time -- at one time, I'm talking about, like, ten years ago, everyone was at 1006, and many people were putting PEX in recirculation systems, and I'm sure that many of them were set to recirculate 100 percent of the time. I know that was happening. But it's more an indication of how our industry has evolved and the standards have, you know, matured over time.

Q At what point did NIBCO begin recommending that customers not use the 1-rated pipe in recirculation systems with over 25 percent hot water recirculation?

A I don't -- I don't remember exactly. I mean, you know, during my tenure as a general manager I know

Page 137

March 1, 2008. Have you seen this document before?

A Yes.

Q Do you know who drafted the document?

A I'm -- I'm not sure. I would -- I would think -- well, this might have been drafted -- well, I had just -- either just become general manager or was a general manager, but I think that probably our technical people put this together. But I do remember seeing it, yes.

Q Do you know the reason that this document was created?

A Well, I think it's an information piece to talk about, you know, chlorine resistance in PEX tubing.

Q Okay. So would that be to -- directed to customers, in other words, to talk to customers about some of the features of the tubing?

A Yes. And education. You know, because there was, as the document states, there's P 171 and F 2023, and there's just a lot of confusion out there about standards and testing, and so I think the purpose of this document was just to kind of clarify things for our customers.

Q Okay. That makes sense. So on the first page here, the different numbered points, there's number 2, "Is DURA-PEX approved for use in chlorinated water

	<i>13</i> .	90	
	Page 138		Page 140
1	systems?" And then do you see the second paragraph in	1	that it was selling at the time was appropriate for use
2	that section where it says, "NIBCO DURA-PEX meets all F	2	in continuous recirculation systems?
3	876 requirements for use in portable water systems"; do	3	A Yes.
4	you see that language?	4	Q And the document doesn't contain any
5	A Yes.	5	disclaimer that the customer should add a timer and to
6	Q And it goes on to say, "Independent testing	6	limit it to 25 percent, right?
7	through NSF International confirms that NIBCO DURA-PEX	7	A No, it does not.
8	not only meets but exceeds the 50-year minimum time-to-	8	Q NIBCO provides installation manuals for its
9	failure when tested for ASTM F 2023." Now, at this	9	products; is that true?
10	time, that last statement wasn't true of the red and	10	A Yes.
11	orange pipe, correct?	11	Q And that's also true for the PEXc tubing,
12	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	12	right?
13	A No. I don't think you can say that, because	13	A Yes.
14	we had been given the tubing had been certified by	14	Q At some point, did NIBCO's installation manual
15	NSF, and we'd been given the listing on all of those. I	15	begin placing restrictions on the use of the 1006 pipe
16	know that there was that information on that one report,	16	in recirculation systems generally?
17	but, again, NSF analyzes the data, determines if the	17	A Well, you know, these documents are constantly
18	tubing meets or does not meet the requirement. So you	18	evolving and, you know, we did, as I recall, had some
19	know, I didn't I'm not a technical guy. I don't	19	line reads that we recommend, you know, 25 percent, you
20	understand everything about that particular test, but	20	know, recirculation, you know, with our with our
21	NSF told us we could represent our tubing as meeting 50	21	product. And so and there have been other you
22	years or greater, and that's why it's in this letter.	22	know, these are evolving documents, subject to change,
23	Q This letter is actually talking about the	23	you know, as time goes by.
24	testing itself rather than the certification, right?	24	Q Okay. In that same section, that number 4, it
25	This independent testing confirmed the DURA-PEX exceeds	25	says, "There are many factors that can affect the
	Page 139		Page 141
1	the 50-year minimum time-to-failure?	1	performance of PEX including the aggressiveness of the
2	A Well,	2	water." And that's a term that I've heard several NIBCO
3	Q That's at least what the document says, right?	3	employees refer to when seeing a document, "aggressive
4	A testing is	4	water." Have you heard that term used before?
5	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	5	A Yes.
6	A is part of that process, yes.	6	Q What does that term mean to you? What is
7	Q And at least based on the testing, the red and	7	aggressive water?
8	orange pipe had failed the testing, correct?	8	A Well, I think it's the like, the pH of the
9	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	9	water, the acidic content of the water. You know, we do
10	A I I don't know what that test was or what	10	know that there's some areas of the country where the
11	those results mean. I think they were both in the high	11	water can be, you know, particularly aggressive. I
12	40s. NSF, for whatever reason, and I don't know why,	12	think that we didn't sell much tubing into Las Vegas,
13	but they allowed us to state that that both of those	13	but I know that that was one area where some of our
14	colors met F 2023, and so I just got to go by their	14	competitors had some issues. So you know, we know that
15	determination on this, you know you know.	15	that exists.
16	Q Okay. So getting back to what we were just	16	Q Are there other areas of the country that are
17	talking about, if you turn to the next page, there's a	17	that NIBCO's aware are notable for having aggressive
18	number 4, "Is DURA-PEX recommended for use in continuous	18	water conditions?
19	recirculation systems?" And the document notes that,	19	A I I don't know. I mean, I don't think we
20	"There are many factors that can affect the performance	20	kept a map of it or anything like that. But I think
21	of the pipes." Then it goes onto say, "NIBCO DURA-PEX	21	that, you know, it depends a lot on, you know, is the
22	has been installed in continuous recirculation systems	22	water is it being treated by a typically, if
23	giving years of worry-free performance." So is it fair	23	water's treated by municipalities, it's usually good
24	to say that at least as of the date of this document,	24	water. The thing you got to be careful there with
25	March 1, 2008, NIBCO still believed that the 1006 pipe	25	municipalities is a lot of times they'll they'll do

Page 142

an overkill on the chlorine because municipalities are concerned about the sanitation of the water and killing all the germs, but they don't care about what the impact might be on your plumbing system and everything else in your house. So it's just -- it's very variable.

Q Are there any specific areas that you know of what you describe as over-chlorinate the water?

A Well, there's none that I can -- I can -- I can recall. A lot of times, it might be something as simple as how close do you live to the water treatment facility. I mean, that can have an impact on it. I mean, over time chlorine dissipates. I think that with a lot of our site inspections that we've done through the years, I -- I'm not sure if I, you know, remember a lot of cases where the chlorine was -- was at a very high level.

Q Do you know what the highest chlorine level is that you would recommend 1006 tubing being used on?

A I don't think there -- I don't know. I just don't know enough about it to comment on that.

Q You mentioned earlier that aggressiveness has to do with the pH level of the water.

A Yeah.

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Q At what pH level would water become aggressive versus not aggressive?

Q Okay. Is North Carolina a state in which NIBCO was aware of aggressive water conditions?

Page 144

Page 145

A No. I don't think we were aware of aggressive water conditions there, but we were aware of a lot of homes built without any kind of pressure relief valves or expansion tanks in the homes.

Q Okay. Were there failures in NIBCO tubing occurring in that area?

A Well, it wasn't NIBCO tubing. It was mostly tubing that had been produced by CPI before we acquired the assets. And we did some investigative work, and what we found out is that the builders, in order to cut costs, did not put pressure relief valves or expansion tanks on most of these homes, and that's an area of the country that is known for high water pressure. And, you know, we -- that's what we suspect happened. But it wasn't our product, so -- but there were customers there that we had done business with in the past and, you know, we had -- we were in the PEX business, and we felt an obligation to look into it and try to explain what had happened.

Q For those CPI products, would there have been any difference, material difference, in the product whether it was manufactured by CPI or NIBCO, other than the name of the tubing?

Page 143

A You know, I don't really -- I don't know. You'd have to talk to one of our technical people about that.

Q Are there other factors that lends an aggressiveness to water, other than pH?

A Well, no. I think that, you know, water conditions are different everywhere and -- no, I don't think so.

Q If a PER were initiated and Debbie or someone else at the DURA lab in Elkhart were doing a review of a sample of PEX tubing that had been sent in, it's a no satisfaction, how would they go about determining the aggressiveness of the water in the application that that pipe may have been installed in?

A Well, I don't think you could determine that from looking at the failure mode in the -- in the tubing. I think you'd have to do a site visit to determine that. And, Tom, that was another thing that he had in his bag of instruments was, you know, to check the pH of the water.

Q So then just based on an inspection of a sample, you wouldn't be able -- NIBCO wouldn't be able to say this failure was caused by aggressive water?

A It would -- it would -- it would be an oxidative failure, yeah.

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

A I just -- not knowing what CPI had done or any kind of reformulation work that they may have done in that -- in the years leading up to 2006, I -- I don't know.

Q Yeah. And I don't want you to guess.

A I can't say it's the same thing, you know, from May -- from May 2006 to June 2006 probably not much difference, but I don't know what went on before then.

Q Okay. And I really --

A And I really don't.

Q -- appreciate that.

A And I know that they changed. I know during that period, you know, there were changes in raw material suppliers, and I don't know -- I really don't know the exact timing of all the product they sold in North Carolina during that period, either.

Q All right. So I guess maybe a better way is to say, do you know specifically of any differences between the tubing that was manufactured by CPI in 2006 and --

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

Q -- tubing that was manufactured by NIBCO in 2008?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.



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Page 146

A Yeah, I -- I don't know of any differences. 1 2 But if we're talking about North Carolina, all that 3 tubing was produced as much as eight to ten years before NIBCO acquired the assets of CPI, and I know for a fact 4 5 that they had changed raw material suppliers, and there 6 had been some changes. And I don't know what other 7 changes they may have made in the E-BEAM dosage. There's 8 a number of variables that, you know, we just -- don't 9 know, because we weren't part of it. 10

Q Is the San Antonio area an area that has particularly aggressive water?

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A I don't know if there's aggressive water there. I do know that San Antonio is an area that has high water pressure. And in fact, the San Antonio Waterworks, if you go to their website, they warn consumers that their water -- the water pressure coming out of their pumping stations can be well above code, which is 80 psi, and they tell people to make sure that they have a pressure relief valve, that it's working properly, and you just have that protection against high pressure entering your home.

Q What are the pressure specifications for the 1006 tubing?

A Well, you know, in our installation manual, if -- if the water's not chlorinated, there really is --

standard throughout the United States that you don't exceed 80 psi.

Q Okay. And that's also kind of the specification for NIBCO tubing. So in other words, NIBCO's facts for pressure are kind of tied to what the national code is for pressure?

Page 148

Page 149

A Well, I don't know if "specification" is the right word, but our recommended operating temperatures

Q Okay. So if over pressurization is determined to be the cause of a particular failure, that means that the pressure that caused that failure was exceeding that UPC or IPC standard for municipal water operations; is that fair?

A Yeah. Over time. PEX tubing, it will withstand short term of very high pressures. In fact, I think our tubing is rated for up to 200 psi, as is most manufacturers. But that rating is on there in case there's something catastrophic that happened and you have like very high water pressure in your house, but that's a safety factor so, you know, your pipes won't immediately burst. But if you operate a PEX piping system at say 120 psi or 150 psi day after day after day, it's kind of like driving your car 150 miles an hour every day. It's not going to last as long as it

Page 147

there are no limits on the water pressure other than what the tubing itself is rated. With chlorinated water, we recommend -- and this is a recommendation we'd make whether it's 100 -- we've kept it with 3308, and we would have it for any type of PEX. You should never exceed 80 psi because, first of all, that's the code, and exceeding 80 psi actually will void warranties on water heaters of some manufacturers and fixtures in a home. So we -- we try to limit the pressure to what the code allows, and we think that's a prudent step to take.

Q And when you say "what the code allows," which code are you referring to?

A Well, it's the -- again, I'm not -- I'm not an expert on these, but it's the national code, and it's pretty much -- it's the -- oh, what is the name of it? But each state -- each state adopts their codes, and they usually adopt what the -- it's call the international code. Seems strange, but it's not international, but it's specific to the US, but most states will adopt the international plumbing code.

Okay. So the 80 psi is pretty standard --

22 Yeah. Α

-- in the United States?

24 A It's either IPC or UPC. Universal plumbing code, international plumbing code. Yeah, it's pretty 25

would if you drove at a reasonable speed, because it

just puts pressure on the -- on the tubing itself. So that's why we place those limits.

Q Does Georgia have notably aggressive water?

A I don't know if they have aggressive water, but that is another area where there's high water pressure. I do -- I recall visiting a home in -- north of Atlanta, and the water pressure at that house was up to 165 psi, more than double what the code is. So I know that that is an area that is known for high water pressure. I don't know about the aggressiveness of the

Q When did you visit that home when you went to Georgia?

A I don't know. It was -- it was probably, like, 2011 or 2012, something in that time period.

Q Why were you there?

A Well, my son lived in Atlanta and this is, again, there was a PER that came through. I knew I was going to be down there. We -- it sort of -- we had just started to do more site visits, and I just visited a home just so I could get a better understanding of things and talk to the homeowner, because I just wanted to gain an understanding what was -- what was happening. So I put a pressure gauge on the home and left it for a



couple of days, and that's what we found.  (EXHIBIT 6 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)  A Thank you.  Q So this document, I believe you've probably seen before?  A Oh, yeah. I remember it well.  Q You wrote it, correct?  A You know, I don't remember the e context of this letter was. We had one context of this letter was. Ve had one context of this letter was. Ve had one context of this letter was. Ve had one co	Page 152
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warranty and also state liability laws that tie 15 was trying to do here is say, "Hey, guys, i	
16 A Yeah 16 matter. You know, we're you know, we	
17 Q into 17 these things." So that was the context of t	
18 A Yeah. 18 was to allay allay some fears that some	
19 Q product issues, and you say, "The purpose 19 and kind of combat this competitor that w	
of a product warranty is to cover the product itself. In 20 explicit in the language of the warranty.	
21 the event that a product proves to be defective in its 21 we're part of a much bigger organization v	
manufacture, the product warranty allows for repair or 22 different products and, you know, if you l	
replacement of such defective product."  23 warranties, you know, there's a lot of similar warranties, you know, there's a lot of similar warranties.	
24 A Yes. 24 between them, and we weren't going to go	
25 Q So the warranty is essentially covering, you 25 these things. And that's what this address	
Page 151	Page 153
1 know, the product itself in dealing with that 2 specifically, right?  1 Q Okay. So this was basically the leading with that 2 an attempt to say, "Okay. There's all these	
3 A Yes. 3 property damages that could occur."	KIIIUS OI
4 Q But then you go on to say, "State product 4 A Yeah.	
5 liability law allows for the recovery of damages caused 5 Q "And even though they're not specification."	fically
6 by defectively manufactured products. Nothing has to be 6 spelled out in the warranty, NIBCO will co	-
7 done to afford you this protection. State law already 7 kinds of things?"	over these
8 provides for it."  8 A Yes.	
9 A Uh-huh. 9 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to the form	m
10 Q So there, I guess you're telling the plumbing 10 Q All right. Well, let's actually check	
contractors, other customers of NIBCO that if there's 11 warranty.	out the
12 damage to property that's caused by a defectively 12 A Okay.	
13 manufactured NIBCO product, state liability law will 13 Q See what it says.	
14 allow recovery for those damages? 14 (EXHIBIT 7 MARKED FOR IDEN	TIFICATION
15 A Yes. 15 A Thank you. Okay. I'm ready.	, 111 10/11/10/11/
16 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 16 Q So does this the language in NIBO	CO's
Q Does NIBCO have a warranty that covers the PEX 17 limited warranty that we're looking at comp	
products? 18 general understanding of the warranty?	port with your
19 A Yes. 19 A Yes.	
Q What's the time period of that warranty? 20 Q And it's 25 years, right, for the tubir	no?
21 A It's 25 years on tubing and ten years on 21 A Yes.	···o·
22 fittings and then, like, maybe one year on tools and 22 Q If NIBCO products are exclusively	used in the
23 some of the other stuff.  23 system, correct, that's 25 years?	
24 Q Does the warranty allow for the recovery of 24 A Yes.	l
25 property damage under state product liability laws? 25 Q Okay. And then if we look at the	- towards

Page 154 Page 156 the bottom of that last full paragraph where there's the 1 for property damage that had resulted? 1 2 bold capitalized language it says, "To the extent 2 A I don't know. I mean, I know that there were 3 3 permitted by law, this warranty specifically excludes certainly some instances, you know, where we did, but I 4 incidental and consequential damages of every type and 4 don't -- it -- I have no idea what the percentage is. 5 description resulting from any claim defect in material 5 Probably something very small I would think, because we 6 6 or workmanship, including but not limited to, personal just didn't have, you know, issues like that. 7 7 injuries and property damage -- damages"; is that what Q Or at least issues with a determination that 8 the warranty says? 8 was that it was a --9 A Yes. 9 A Correct. 10 10 Q So how does that statement in the warranty Q -- manufacturing design defect? 11 comport with your statement to customers in the letter 11 A Correct. that state product liability laws will allow for the 12 Q How would -- regardless of the number of times 12 13 recovery of those types of damages, including property 13 it happened, how would NIBCO go about making the 14 damage? 14 determination as to whether that kind of payment would 15 A Well, you know, I'm not an attorney, but I 15 be made? 16 mean, the NIBCO legal department obviously has approved 16 A Well, it -- you know, it had to be our fault, 17 this warranty, and I know that I worked with them on 17 you know, or an obvious product defect. And our 18 this letter. And so you know, I basically was going by 18 technical services people, I mean, they're very good at 19 their advice and guidance in writing this letter, which 19 handling these issues, and they -- they took care of 20 addressed the issue with a competitor's warranty. 20 taking care of the customer. 21 Q Okay. And I certainly appreciate that you're 21 Q Okay. I guess I should ask -not a lawyer and that, you know, you didn't draft the 22 22 A I mean, they weren't waiting for my approval, 23 dry language and --23 you know. A Yeah, I know this -- this, you know, these 24 Q That's what I was going to ask. Did you have 24 25 warranties typically are very, you know --25 any involvement in determining whether a payment would Page 155 Page 157 1 1 be made for product --Q They're not --2 A -- draconian and protecting, and this is 2 A No. They would probably consult with me and 3 let me know, but, no, they went ahead and took care of 3 certainly an example of one. But I guess this was the 4 kinder, gentler version. 4 things. 5 5 Q Well, so based on just your -- as a non-Q Was there ever an instance where they had a 6 6 lawyer, based on -position on whether they should be paying property 7 7 A Right. damages, the technical people, and you disagreed with 8 Q -- reading the warranty and specifically that 8 their conclusion? 9 9 language that I just read out of it regarding property A No. No, I never refused. 10 damage, do you believe that the statement you made in 10 MR. KUHLMAN: Okay if we go and break? 11 your July 2012 letter regarding recovery under state 11 MR. SHAMBERG: Yes, sir. 12 product liability law is an accurate statement? 12 (OFF THE RECORD) MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. BY MR. SHAMBERG: 13 13 14 A Well, that -- that's what I -- you know, 14 Q So earlier we were talking about the site 15 that's what I was counseled and the letter, if it wasn't 15 inspections, and you said that typically Tom Coe was 16 written -- it wasn't -- I mean, it was -- it was written 16 kind of the go-to guy to do the site inspections? 17 17 with a lot -- lot of help from our legal department, and A Yes. 18 so I would -- these -- even though I'm on the letter, I 18 Q What qualified Tom to be in the best position 19 didn't write these words and this was, you know, what we 19 to perform those inspections? 20 chose to communicate to our customers in consultation 20 A Well, Tom has -- you know, he was an original CPI associate, and he's been the product manager for --21 with our legal staff. 21 22 Q So during your time as general manager of the 22 I'm trying to think when he started with CPI. But he's PEX products, for all the PERs that came in relating 23 23 got, you know, a lot of experience, and he also is kind 24 specifically to the PEX tubing, on what percentage of of a -- kind of a handyman, you know. He's a woodworker 24 25 those PERs did NIBCO provide a payment to the customer and does a lot of work at his home. And so the site 25



Page 158

- inspections involve you to take readings, but you also have to know a little bit about plumbing, and it's not so much a technical-type job as a job of being able to look at things, see a plumbing system and what it has or doesn't have. And so he -- we thought that he'd be the б best person to do it. We didn't want anyone from sales doing it, and our -- our engineers in Elkhart are typically, you know, they're working on all kinds of things other than PEX, so Tom was kind of a natural, you
  - Q What about Debbie Premus?

know, person to do it.

A Well, Debbie's responsibilities are at the plant, you know. She's there to ensure that what we're making on a day-to-day basis is -- is good product. So we really needed her, you know, to stay in Lebanon.

Q Okay. And then we were also talking about some areas that you said are kind of notable for having high water pressure in North Carolina, San Antonio area, Georgia, at least -- or at least parts of Georgia.

A Yes.

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Q Does NIBCO have any kind of list of these areas? I mean, you seemed to recognize particular areas. Is there a comprehensive list of -- hey, here are the places we've, you know, identified as having high water pressure?

Page 159

A I don't think that we do. It was something that I had, you know, discussed and wanted to, you know, like, take a map and document it just so I have, you know, a greater understanding of it, but I don't think we ever got to that. At least not when I was there. I don't know if they've done it since then.

Q Are there -- other than the ones you've already discussed today, are there other areas within the United States that you're aware of that are notable for that --

A Well, I think the Southeast in general is an area where we've observed very high water pressure. Alabama, Tennessee. Actually, North Carolina, the hotspot was the Charlotte area, even extending, you know, into South Carolina there in the Charlotte metro area. A lot of times it's areas where there's a lot of population growth. And so what will happen is, you know, cities can't afford to put in more pumping stations, so what they do is they extend the lines and just increase the pressure at the main pumping station. So if you're near that pumping station, they're just blasting you. So a lot of it is areas where there's a lot of population growth that is exceeding the ability of municipalities to extend infrastructure. So those are just things we kind of learned, you know, over time,

Page 160

- and then sometimes I'd go into communities. I can't remember the town, but I was in a town in Alabama and the guy said, "Hey, you know, our water pressure gets up to 180 psi every night. Is that bad?" I go, yeah, yeah. That's kind of bad. You might want to do something about that. So these are just learnings from being out there and selling this product.
  - Q So NIBSO sales department was for the PEX products. Is that split up by area or region?

A Well, we -- every NIBCO salesperson would sell PEX, and then we had Sunbelt Marketing who was an agent for us, and we had another agent in the Northeast, and then under me, I had regional PEX sales managers who kind of directed the whole thing. He was kind of the resident PEX expert.

Q And Sunbelt, I think you said was focused on the Southeast; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Was there a NIBCO associate or salesperson who was assigned the Southeast region of the United States?

A Not really. I usually took responsibility for that. I was the general manager, but I usually only kept -- we have three regions. I had a person in the central US and the western US, and then I usually took care of the East, because of our agents who were located

Page 161

in the East, they were very good at what they did, and didn't need as much oversight.

Q After NIBCO became aware -- well, let me ask this. Around when did you become aware of notably high water pressures generally in the Southeast?

A Well, you know, probably around 2010, '11, '12, that -- that kind of timeframe. That's when we started to notice it. We also -- but we were also aware of it early. I remember in 2008, we were aware of the issues at the Charlotte area. And that was tubing that CPI had sold, and we were looking into that. And in fact, some work had been done in 2007, and we were aware of high water pressure in those areas.

Q So whether it's respect to Charlotte in around 2008 or more generally the Southeast of the United States in that 2010, '11, '12 timeframe, when NIBCO became aware of the high water pressure in these areas, did NIBCO begin informing distributors or customers in those regions, "Hey, we're aware that there's high water pressure here. Make sure that the application isn't exceeding the pressure limits for the product?"

A Well, that's when we started in our installation manual, you know, putting, you know, cautions about not exceeding 80 psi, you know, chlorinated water. You know, I don't think we -- you

Page 162 Page 164 1 1 know, other than, you know, discussing it with customers A Yeah, I'm looking at that stack over there. 2 during sales calls, I didn't put anything out. I didn't 2 Thank you. 3 3 put out a bulletin saying that, you know, these areas, O And I'll just let you know that you should because even within an area, it may be good on one side 4 feel free to review this document in its entirety. My 4 5 of town and bad on the other, and we were just still 5 questions are going to focus on this e-mail on the first 6 really learning what was going on. 6 page. 7 7 Q With respect to Charlotte, you said that the A Oh, okay. Q And the -failures that you saw occurring there in around the 8 8 2007, '8 timeframe were for pipe that was manufactured 9 9 Α That's fine. by CPI --10 Q But if you want to review the whole thing, 10 11 11 A Yes. please do. -- and sold by CPI prior to the acquisition, 12 A No, no. Let me read this. I -- I think I 12 Q 13 remember some of this. Okay. 13 right? 14 A Yes. 14 Q So this is an e-mail chain discussing a certain PER that was opened with respect to a homeowner 15 Q I might have asked you this earlier. I 15 16 apologize if I did, but the acquisition of CPI occurred 16 named James Owens: is that correct? 17 in 2006. How long thereafter did CPI continue to exist 17 A Yes. 18 as an entity separate from NIBCO? 18 Q Okay. And in this e-mail that I mentioned, 19 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 19 first one of the document, is written by Ken McCoy to 20 A Well, in May 2006, we, you know, purchased the 20 Kate Emery, and you were CC'd on it on August 2, 2012; 21 assets of CPI and, you know, everyone at CPI became, you 21 do you see that e-mail? 22 know, part of the NIBCO team, and then as time went by, 22 A Yes. 23 we transitioned, and there were some functions that we 23 Q And it seems that in this e-mail Ken is didn't need, some corporate functions that we didn't discussing the disposition of the PER, and he's 24 24 25 need because of duplication, and really, today, I think 25 essentially saying that the fittings that were at issue Page 163 Page 165 1 1 the only CPI associate from a management standpoint were manufactured by CPI, not NIBCO; is that fair? 2 who's left is Tom Coe. But they were a pretty small 2 A It appears that way, you know, from that --3 3 outfit. I mean, this is a real small -- you know, they from this e-mail, but I don't know exactly. -- there were probably only eight people in the office, 4 Q And I wanted to ask you about the last line of 4 5 5 you know, including the customer service people, so it this e-mail, where he says, "You'll have to pursue the 6 б wasn't a huge operation. matter with CPI?" 7 7 Q So -- and, again, I know that you're not a A Yes. 8 8 lawyer, so when I ask this question, I don't intend it Q In August of 2012, how would Mr. Owens have to be what are the corporate formalities of the separate 9 gone about pursuing the matter with CPI? 9 10 existence of legal entities, but just more in a 10 A Well, I don't know why Ken said that, but I -practical sense by, let's say, 2008, if someone was 11 11 I do know that -- because, you know, what I had told you trying to get into contact with CPI, they would be 12 earlier, that CPI basically didn't exist, I'm not sure 12 contacting NIBCO at that point; is that fair? 13 if Ken understood that. So I don't know why he would 13 14 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 14 say this. I can only -- I can only speculate. You A Well, yeah, I mean, the -- CPI was owned by 15 15 know, I do know that for a period of time, after the 16 the Warren Group, and then -- which was, like, a 16 acquisition of the assets of CPI, if there were some 17 17 syndicate of investors, and so when we acquired the warranty claims, we were sending those to CPI's 18 assets of CPI, we -- you know, we also hired those 18 insurance carrier, and they were taking care of warranty 19 people. So you know, there wouldn't be -- there wasn't 19 issues. And that could be what he was thinking of here, 20 any place to call, --20 but, you know, it doesn't -- it doesn't contradict what 21 Q Okay. 21 I said earlier, that basically -- unless, you know --22 -- per se. 22 and Kate would have known that, too. 23 23 (EXHIBIT 8 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) Q Would a homeowner like Mr. Owens have been 24 Q Last document for me. He might have more for 24 aware that NIBCO was still processing some warranty 25 25 you. claims through CPI?

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	Page 166		Page 168
1	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	1	Q Okay. And these are the people that reported
2	A Well, I don't know. I know that there	2	to you in the
3	there was an information sheet that we were sharing with	3	A At that time.
4	people when CPI warranty issues arose, and we were doing	4	Q company. And do you know where Mr.
5	the best that we could to get the information into	5	Kalberer is nowadays?
6	people's hands. This is where you need to go, you know,	6	A Doug, he left us, and the last I heard, he was
7	if you're seeking recourse. But in this particular	7	working for Sioux Chief Manufacturing.
8	case, I don't know.	8	Q Okay. Do you know where they're located?
9	Q I notice Ken put quotes around CPI there at	9	A Peculiar, Missouri.
10	the end of the e-mail. Do you think he did that because	10	Q And how about Mario Orlando, PEX Western sales
11	he knew he was sending Mr. Owens on a wild goose chase?	11	manager, where is he now?
12	A Oh, I don't know what that I don't know	12	A I do not know where he is at, but he lived in
13	what he meant by that. You'd have to talk to Ken.	13	southern California. I'm sorry. I don't know who he's
14	Q I did ask him about that.	14	working for today.
15	A Oh, did you?	15	Q Okay. And in this document it shows you, your
16	Q Okay. Let me take a second and look at my	16	direct report is to Mr. Malm, right?
17	notes.	17	A Yes.
18	A Okay.	18	Q Okay. And was there a routine reporting of
19	(OFF THE RECORD)	19	some sort that you gave to Mr. Malm as to the condition
20	MR. SHAMBERG: Okay. I have no more questions.	20	and operation of the PEX business?
21	EXAMINATION	21	A All of the direct reports to Steve Malm were
22	BY MR. DEUTSCH:	22	on a committee called the operating committee, and we
23	Q Mr. Doering, I'm Larry Deutsch. I represent	23	met once a month, and then I would usually do a brief
24	the plaintiffs in the Meadow case, and we're also	24	report once a month.
25	seeking national class on behalf of purchasers of	25	Q And that would be a written report?
	Page 167		Page 169
1	NIBCO's PEX products. So I'm going to try my best not	1	A That would be usually, like, a PowerPoint.
2	to repeat questions that my colleague asked, but	2	Q Okay. And who was on the operating committee?
3	occasionally I may stray into something you've already	3	A Well, it would be everyone that reported
4	answered, and I beg your indulgence on that. So before	4	directly to Steve Malm at the time, back in 2009, so
5	we get underway, I want to make sure first I understand	5	Clyde Hayes and Jim Hilfinger, Jeff Shreiner, and then
6	your position in the NIBCO organization with the PEX	6	if you go back here on other sheets, there's Bill Geers
7	products.	7	and Steve Kemp and Chris Mason and Dave Goodling, and
8	A Okay.	8	Gary Wilson.
9	Q So I've marked this as Meadow 44, and have you	9	Q Okay. So you would produce some kind of
10	take a look at it. And tell me if you recognize it and	10	monthly written report to Mr. Malm; is that correct?
11	if it appears to be an organization chart that includes	11	A Usually, yeah.
12	you as general manager of PEX?	12	Q Were there any other written reports that you
13	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 44 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATIO)	N) 13	routinely provided to him?
14	A Yes.	14	A No. No, that you know, I mean, every year
15	Q It's a document that encompasses Meadow's	15	or every month our accounting department, you know,
16	documents 123109 through 123113. So if you can tell me	16	published the financials, and that was, you know, that
17	if you recognize this	17	was a consistent report month after month, and then at
18	A Yeah, I recognize	18	the operating committee meeting, we either I either
19	Q and it seems to be an accurate depiction of	19	had prepared a PowerPoint on where we're at with things,
20	your role	20	or it was just a we'd do a roundtable, and I'd just
21	A Yes.	21	give them a summary of what we were up to, what kind of
22	Q in PEX	22	month we had.
23	A Yeah.	23	Q Okay. Did you do any direct reporting to Mr.
24	Q as of November 2009?	24	Martin as the CEO of NIBCO?
25	A Yes.	25	A No.

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	Page 170		Page 172
1	Q Okay. Did you, on occasion, do some reporting	1	present general manager today, but she is performing a
2	directly to Mr. Martin?	2	similar role. She
3	A Not directly. There were a couple of meetings	3	Q What was her role under your
4	a year where we did a kind of a half year, end of year	4	A Oh, she just, you know, helped with clerical
5	summary, and Rex would sometimes sit in on that. But I	5	stuff. Wasn't at the plant. She was up at Elkhart. She
6	was delivering that to the entire operating committee,	6	was just assigned to help me with
7	and Rex would sometimes make an appearance and sit in	7	Q Did she kind of keep your records?
8	Q Okay. And that was also something you did in	8	A Yeah, yeah. Just when I needed help. It's
9	writing that you ultimately shared with the operating	9	kind of different today, because we all have laptops,
10	committee;	10	and we don't have people doing our letters anymore.
11	A Yeah.	11	Q And at the bottom of this organization chart
12	Q is that right?	12	under you, you have operations manager Lebanon, Marc
13	A Yeah.	13	Lara
14	Q Okay. Now, the way this is designed on Meadow	14	A Laracuenta.
15	44 it looks like PEX is a separate operating entity; is	15	Q Laracuenta?
16	that correct?	16	A Yes.
17	A Yes.	17	Q And what was his role under you?
18	Q Okay. And that stayed that way to the	18	A Well, Mark was responsible for, I believe
19	present?	19	there's at the PEX plant there's three operations.
20	A Yes.	20	There's the production or extrusion of the tubing, and
21	Q That you know of? Okay.	21	then there's secondary processing where you coil it, cut
22	A Yeah. We felt that, you know, the PEX	22	it to length, and then the third operation is storing it
23	business was was different than some of our other	23	and shipping it. And Mark would have been responsible
24	businesses. One part of it is it's a system that you're	24	for the secondary processing and the shipping of the
25	selling. You know, our other businesses are just	25	product. And then the other gentleman, Pat Borgerding,
	Page 171		Page 173
1	selling valves or fittings, whereas this, you're selling	1	he was in charge of the extrusion of the tubing.
2	a system, they felt like. And then since it was a	2	Q Do you know if they're still with NIBCO?
3	relatively a new business to NIBCO, they felt like it	3	A No, they are no longer with NIBCO.
4	needed its own focus, and having a general manager was	4	Q Do you know where they went?
5	part of that.	5	A I do not know. I know that Mark is in
6	Q I'd like you to take a look at what's been	6	Columbus, Ohio. He got into something totally
7	marked as Meadow 45, which encompasses Meadow's Bates	7	different. I think it's a company that makes paint. I
8	numbers 123118 through 122. And this is an organization	8	don't know the name of it. I don't know where Pat
9	chart. It shows on the bottom right-hand corner it's	9	Borgerding went.
10	October 2012. And if you could take a look at this,	10	Q Okay. In Meadow 44, we saw there's a Doug
11	tell me if you recognize it. Tell me if it appears to	11	Kalberer
12	be an accurate depiction of NIBCO and the period October	12	A Yes.
13	2012 and particularly your organization on the third	13	Q in that in your organization chart. Do
14	page?	14	you know why he left NIBCO?
15	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 45 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATIO)	N) 15	A I don't know. I think he had a I think
16	A Yes, it is accurate.	16	that he was you know, our sales our PEX sales
17	Q And these are the correct direct reports here	17	managers had big territories. Doug's territory was from
18	at this period of time October 2012?	18	Texas all the way to Minnesota, and I think he was tired
19	A Yes.	19	of the travel, and so he went to Sioux Chief
20	Q And is Michelle Mast still with NIBCO, to your	20	Manufacturing, took a it's like a marketing or
21	knowledge?	21	product development role there.
22	A Yes.	22	Q Okay. Now, aside from your reports at the
23	Q Do you know where her current assignment is?	23	operating committee to Mr. Malm, could you describe Mr.
24	A I think that she's still an administrative	24	Malm's involvement in the PEX business?
25	assistant. I don't know if she's an assistant to the	25	A Well, you know, Steve, he was not involved in

Page 174 Page 176 1 ultimately reported to Mr. Martin directly regarding the 1 any day-to-day, you know, details of the business. You 2 2 know, I would report to him at the operating committee. PEX business? 3 3 I also, in my previous testimony, talked about the A No. business management teams that we had, and he would 4 4 Q Now, part of the PEX business is not only the 5 sometimes sit in on those meetings, which usually lasted 5 tubing but the fittings and the clamps; is that right? 6 no more than two hours once a month. And so you know, 6 A Correct. 7 7 he was familiar with the direction of the business and Q That's part of a whole system, right? what we were working on, but he didn't get involved in a 8 8 Α 9 day-to-day basis with anything. 9 Q And NIBCO didn't make the fittings and clamps Q Did you normally inform him if there were 10 10 for the PEX system, right? issues of concern about how the PEX business was 11 A That's correct. 11 12 Okay. It required them going to a vendor, 12 performing? Q A Well -- well, I think at the business 13 13 right? 14 management team meeting, you know, we talked about 14 A Yes. things in general, and so, you know, he knew -- you 15 Q And who were the vendors that NIBCO used for 15 16 know, he knew about, you know, things that we were 16 its fittings and clamps? 17 working on and, you know, things that we were thinking 17 A Well, we had several vendors for fittings. 18 about getting into and challenges that we were facing. Linx was one of the vendors. There was another company 18 19 Q When you say "challenges," what would you fit 19 I believe called Asian Union that we used. With the --20 into that category for the PEX business? 20 with the connection devices, I can't remember the name 21 A Well, I mean, we talked mostly about, you 21 of our copper crimping source, but it was -- it was a 22 know, actions by our competitors and what we were going 22 domestic source. There was a stainless steel client 23 to do and jobs that we were -- customers we were trying 23 that we actually stopped selling. We were buying that to convert and customers that we may have lost for one 24 from a company called -- from -- called Murray. We were 24 25 reason or another, and we -- those were the kind of 25 selling those at the time, but I -- we got out of that Page 175 Page 177 1 1 things that we talked about mostly. near the end of my tenure. And then like I said before, 2 Q Did he get involved in any way in the 2 some of the ancillary products, we bought from Sioux 3 3 reformulation project that you identified earlier in Chief Manufacturing. But those were the main sources. 4 4 Q Okay. And when you say "connection devices," your testimony? 5 5 A Not really, no. Other than -- other than we could you define what you mean? 6 6 -- you know, we, you know, told him what -- talked to A Well, a PEX connection's a mechanical joint. 7 7 him about what we wanted to do and, you know, got his And so you have a fitting that has barbs on it. It's 8 8 blessing on -- on things. And then, of course, I think inserted into the tubing, then the connection device on 9 9 the outside of the tube, and then you use a tool to that with that investment level that David Bobo had in 10 his proposal, I don't know if they spent all that money, 10 crimp that mechanical device around the tubing. That 11 but that was going to go to his level for a signoff, 11 holds everything together so it doesn't come apart. And 12 most of what we sold, I'd say 80 percent, were copper 12 so... 13 crimp rings. Those were the -- you know, a very good 13 Q And did that happen? Did that go to --14 A Yes. 14 connection system and most popular with our customers. 15 -- Mr. Malm's level? 15 Q Okay. And your testimony a little while ago, Q 16 you said that you, if I understood you right, that you 16 A I'm sure that it did, yes. 17 And he approved that? 17 got out of the stainless steel clamps that Murray O 18 A Yeah. 18 produced; --Is that right? 19 19 Q A Yes. 20 20 Yeah, yeah, yeah. Q -- is that right? Okay. And why was that? Α 21 Do you know if that went to Mr. Martin's 21 Why did you stop using them? Q 22 level? 22 A Well, we -- I think the main reason was we 23 A I don't know. 23 didn't think that it was, you know, our -- we were Q Do you recall any specific reports, and I selling mostly to plumbers, who were professionals, and 24 24 25 don't mean a routine report, but just any topic that you we felt like the clamp was more of a

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Page 178

do-it-yourselfer-type device, and they were -- one thing that was happening is that some people were importing cheap tools from China, and these tools were being used on the clamps, and it introduced a lot of problems that we couldn't control, because these tools are interchangeable. And so we -- we just felt like -- and we weren't selling a lot of them. And so we felt we'd just focus on -- on copper. And then we -- we had a third clamping device called the stainless steel sleeve we could sell along with those, but we thought that it -- they had more benefits, and so we -- we wanted to focus on -- on those two connection devices. 

Q So were a number of problems reported with the stainless steel clamps?

A There were a few. It wasn't -- it wasn't anything major. But I think we just had some -- there's just some things about it that we just didn't like, and we weren't selling that many of them, so we decided, you know, to change the direction we were in.

Q Did you ever determine if there was something wrong with the stainless steel clamp that was produced?

A No, no. You know, there may have been a, like a dud every once in a while, but, no, there wasn't -- there wasn't anything wrong with them. Just that another problem with them is that with the copper crimp

78 | Page 180

special fittings that had expansions for the water heater. Just all kinds of things like that. Things are kind of close to being a fitting, but really isn't.

Q Okay. So you mentioned a few vendors you dealt with. Was another vendor Marshall Brass?

A Yes. CPI was purchasing fittings from Marshall Brass. And then we also did, oh, probably for a couple of years after the acquisition. And I think it was around -- yeah, it was around 2008 that we switched to offshore sources for the fittings.

Q And what were those offshore sources?

A The ones that I had mentioned, Linx and the Asian Union.

Q And did you ever have problems with those sources?

A We only had one -- one problem that involved Linx, and that involved just a handful of fittings. And at their factory, the wrong alloy was put into the fitting, and we had noticed some unusual stress cracking in some of the fittings. And so we -- we did a quick investigation, and then we did a -- kind of a product exchange with our customers trying to get as many fittings back as we could. And then -- and then for the next several years, unfortunately, there were some issues that we became aware of, and then we worked

Page 179

line, it fits on the tubing, and you can position it almost perfectly on the -- on the tubing. The clamp is -- was bigger than the tubing, so you know, you're trying to hit a spot. You're supposed to install these devices one-eighth of an inch from the end of the tube, and a lot of installers, because there was so much slack, they had trouble hitting it, you know. We just -- we just thought there's too many variables here, you know. It's hard for installers to use. Not many professionals use them. We're selling to professionals. Why are we in this? So we got out of it.

Q Okay. And earlier in your -- the answer you just gave me, you referred to what you called "ancillary products."

A Sure.

Q Could you explain what that is?

A Oh, there's just all kinds of things. PEX tubing, typically, you don't want it touching any metal. And a lot of people use steel studs in buildings today, so we had grommets that you would put in the holes in these studs so that the tubing would slide on plastic. We had supports so that you'd have a perfect bend radius for the tubing when going around corners. There are -- PEX tubing cannot be connected -- you have to be 18

inches away from the water heater, so we would sell

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through the issues with our customer. But it was something that we knew about, you know, immediately and we took, you know, what we thought -- what we think are responsible steps to, you know, resolve it.

Page 181

Q I think you referred to, maybe I'm mischaracterizing it, as a handful of these fittings from Linx. Do you have, like, a numeric count?

A I don't know the exact number. I think it was, like, five configurations and with maybe, I think, 80 -- around 80 percent of the failures were just one -- one particular fitting configuration. It was a T, as I recall. I don't remember exactly which configuration it was. But it was -- I think it might have been a one inch by -- one inch by one inch by -- or a half inch by half inch by one inch T. I think that may have been the one that was affected the most.

Q And --

A As I recall.

Q Do you have an understanding of -- like how many of the Ts were sold to the public?

A Oh, it was -- I'm trying to remember. It -- it wasn't -- you know, it was in the thousands. It wasn't in the hundreds of thousands.

Q When you discovered this problem with the Ts from Linx that were sold to customers, was there an

7407 Page 182 Page 184 accounting adjustment done by NIBCO to reflect its 1 regularly audit our suppliers and ensure they were 1 2 anticipated costs of fixing that problem? 2 meeting our standards. 3 3 A Well, you know, the fittings, you know, we Q Given that program, how did the Linx defective didn't manufacture them. They were made by Linx, and so 4 fittings get through the systems that you've installed? 4 5 we were working with Linx and their insurance carrier, 5 A I don't know if we'll ever know. But I, you 6 6 you know, to pay the claims, because they were paying know, we did seek a corrective action plan from them. I 7 7 the claims. If there was any damages we were, you know, don't know if I personally saw it. I think our obviously, replacing, you know, the product, you know, 8 purchasing people took care of that. And I know that 8 9 9 if they needed new product. But I -- I don't know what, they were -- they were in their plant, you know, making 10 10 sure that -- giving us assurances that this wouldn't you know, accounting adjustments there were. 11 Q But you're saying Linx was stepping up to 11 happen again. But I think it was just a mistake by an 12 12 cover whatever costs were involved; -individual, you know, on -- on one of the shifts. And 13 it wasn't -- it wasn't a lot of fittings, but, you know, 13 A That's correct. 14 Q -- is that correct? And that included --14 it was -- there were enough out there to create some 15 They had their carrier. 15 problems for some folks. Q Do you have any idea of how many sites wound 16 Q I'm sorry. The plumbing costs, damage to 16 17 people's property? 17 up using the defective fittings? A That's correct. 18 A You know, I -- it's been so long since I've, 18 19 Q And were -- so people that came back to you 19 you know, seen -- seen the numbers. You know, it was, 20 with Linx fittings and it failed, those claims were 20 you know, probably more than 20, but not, you know, not 21 approved in full; is that fair to say? 21 in the hundreds or anything like that, you know. 22 A That's correct, yes. 22 Q Now, as part of the PR program run by NIBCO 23 Q Okay. And do you remember who their insurance 23 relating to PEX --A Yes. carrier was that you said covered the claims? 24 24 25 A I think it was Chubb. 25 Q -- under your direction, was there a protocol Page 183 Page 185 1 Q That raises a question. On any claims 1 when people complained or sent in fittings to NIBCO as 2 submitted to NIBCO, not Linx, does NIBCO look at an 2 to how you evaluate what the cause of the failure was 3 3 insured to cover the costs of claims that come in from and whether or not NIBCO would cover the costs to --4 4 A Yeah, it was the same process as the PEX the public? 5 5 A Not -tubing. And the fittings were sent to our lab in 6 6 Q The PEX business? Elkhart, and then they would evaluate the fittings and 7 7 A If it's products that we make? try to make a determination if it was a manufacturing 8 8 defect or not. 9 9 Not -- not typically. I think -- no, I don't Q Was there a written protocol of what the 10 -- I don't think we've made -- well, I'm not sure. I 10 people evaluating the fittings that came into your 11 don't think we've made claims to our insurance company. 11 system used? 12 I think we've -- we've just take -- taken care of it. 12 A I don't know for sure, but I'm fairly Q Now, these fittings that you got from your 13 confident that they had, you know, a road map on what 13 14 vendors, was there a protocol in how NIBCO tested the 14 are the steps to take to evaluate those things. 15 fittings and clamps before it sold them to --15 Q Were there certain tests they applied to 16 A Yes. 16 evaluating the fittings that were returned? 17 A You know, I just wasn't that familiar with it, 17 -- the public? 18 A Yeah, yeah. We did -- you know, I don't know 18 Larry. I -- I know that they were very good at what

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referring to?

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all the tests, but we did extensive testing to make sure

that it met the standards. We also had -- I'm trying to

think of the term for this document. But we -- we had a

document for vendors that basically explained what our

these sources were Asian sources, we had a member of our

specifications were for that product. Since some of

purchasing department who lived in China and would

they did. We had a metallurgist on our staff, who often

weighed in on failures, and he was very good and, you

things, but they -- they were -- they were the experts.

Q Who was the metallurgist you were just

A Ben Lawrence was the metallurgist, yeah.

know, they used microscopes to look very deeply at these

Page 186 Page 188 1 Q Now, at some point did NIBCO deal with the 1 resistant and low-lead brass, which means it's less than 2 issue of dezincification of some of its fittings? 2 .25 percent lead content. 3 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 3 Q Okay. But prior to that, NIBCO had sold 4 4 yellow brass as part of its PEX system, correct? A Well, can you restate that? I'm not sure I 5 understand ---5 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 6 MR. DEUTSCH: Can you read that back? 6 A Yeah. We had sold them, and they met all 7 A -- what the question is. 7 applicable standards, and we really, I don't know for COURT REPORTER: I can do a playback. 8 8 sure, but I don't think we had any failures with any 9 9 MR. DEUTSCH: Oh, a playback. Wow. This is fittings in the field. 10 10 very high-tech. Q And do you know that as of today, that no COURT REPORTER: Hold on. Let me go back and 11 11 failures have come to light? fix the volume. 12 A Well, there have been very few. There have 12 MR. DEUTSCH: Oh, that's what that little 13 been very few that -- that I was aware of when I worked 13 14 device we have here? 14 at NIBCO, fitting failures. 15 COURT REPORTER: This line, yes, but it plays 15 Q But just so I'm clear, NIBCO did sell yellow 16 out of my computer. I just have to switch the sound 16 brass to customers up until 2011? 17 system to which one I use. 17 Α Yeah. MR. DEUTSCH: It's going to take a while. I Yes? 18 18 Q 19 can repeat what I'm asking. That's okay. 19 A Uh-huh. 20 COURT REPORTER: Okay. 20 Q All right. I'm going to change topics for a 21 BY MR. DEUTSCH: 21 moment. Just -- I think in your testimony earlier today 22 Q Was there a time when NIBCO became aware of 22 you talked about aggressive water, and does that include 23 and began to deal with issues of dezincification of its 23 like the level of chlorine that you find in there? brass fittings? 24 24 A Yeah. I -- I don't know the exact definition 25 A Okay. Okay. Yeah, when we first got into the 25 of that, but I think we're probably talking about both Page 187 Page 189 1 PEX business, our engineers were aware of some 1 pH and chlorine. Q Is there some level of chlorine that NIBCO 2 2 dezincification issues that some of our competitors are 3 3 -- had had, in the early 2000s is when most of the would define as aggressive? 4 problems occurred. And we had been an advocate in our 4 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 5 5 industry for delignification-resistant brass for quite a A I don't know. I don't know enough about that. 6 б long time. I kind of learned this after the fact, after Q It appears to me that your experience would be 7 7 we had gotten into the PEX business where brass was that you would -- it would be unlikely to find more than 8 8 commonly used. And so we -- our people led the push for one part per million of chlorine in portable water in 9 somebody's house; is that fair to say? 9 the industry to commit and adopt dezincification or 10 resistant fittings. They're also called DCR fittings. 10 A Well, I -- I don't know. I'd have to go back 11 You may have seen that on some documents. And so I'm 11 and look at Tom's reports. But as I recall, the trying to remember the dates of all these things, but in 12 chlorine probably ranged from 1 part per minute -- one 12 part per million to maybe three or four at the high 13 -- in the 2011, 2012 timeframe, we started converting 13 from yellow brass to DCR brass. At the same time, our 14 14 level. 15 -- there were low-lead brass requirements passed in 15 Q If there were some instances you found 16 California, and, you know, California is such a good 16 chlorine as high as three parts per million? 17 A Well, you know, I'm just kind of going off 17 part of the country, if you're going to change for 18 California, you might as well change for everyone else, 18 memory, and I'm not sure. But I don't -- I think that 19 because it's -- you know, why have two inventories. And 19 in most cases, I don't think chlorine -- high chlorine so there was federal legislation passed requiring low-20 20 levels were an issue in a lot of those cases we 21 lead brass, and so there was those -- those things kind 21 investigated. 22 of -- they weren't simultaneous, but the low-lead brass 22 Q Okay. Another change in topic. So when NIBCO acquired what you call the assets of CPI, what was Mr. 23 followed right after the DCR. And then I suppose it was 23 24 in that 2011, 2012, 2013 timeframe, we started making 24 Nathan's role in the acquisition period? 25 the switch to fittings that had both dezincification-25 A Well, Chris headed up the team, and then after

Page 190 Page 192 we acquired the assets of CPI, Chris was responsible for 1 1 A Well, when -- if -- when there was a line 2 the integration of the business into NIBCO. And, you 2 review, yes, we participated and competed. 3 3 know, we have operating systems and, you know, just O And when was that? 4 4 different company culture. All kinds of things that A Oh, I don't know when it was, but, you know, 5 when we acquire, you know, new people and, you know, to 5 you usually get an opportunity every four years or so. I 6 get them integrated into, you know, our way of doing don't know when the last one was. And you go in, and 6 7 things. 7 you make a big presentation, and then you find out 8 O And he had that role from when to when? 8 whether you've unseated the incumbent. And that's the 9 9 A Well, he had that role from 2006 -- the other thing in retail, the incumbents have a very strong integration probably was completed around, you know, 10 10 position and, you know, it's difficult to unseat them at 11 2008, 2009 as we officially said, you know, we're 11 12 12 integrated. But then the plant continued to report to Q Did you ever get any feedback from Home Depot 13 him even though I was the general manager until 2012. 13 and Lowe's as to why they didn't select NIBCO's PEX 14 And then in 2012, I actually moved from our headquarters 14 products? 15 15 in Elkhart, Indiana to Lebanon, and that's when I A No. I think a lot of times it comes down to 16 assumed responsibility. I was still general manager, 16 price. 17 but I had responsibility for the manufacturing operation 17 Q Now, a little while ago when we were talking 18 18 about the problem with Linx fittings, when you as well. 19 Q Let me touch on your work history then with 19 discovered the problem, how did you communicate to 20 the PEX and what was the explanation you were given when 20 end-users that the problem was defective? What steps 21 you took over the PEX business in 2008 as to why you 21 did you take? were getting that job? 22 22 A Well, we immediately -- we sent a letter to 23 A Oh, why I was -- well, I had done -- you know, 23 all of our wholesalers, wholesale distributors, and they then were responsible for -- you know, they had lot 24 I had been product manager when we started sourcing PEX, 24 25 and I led that project, and then prior to that I was the 25 numbers and serial numbers and date codes and everything Page 193 Page 191 1 1 national sales manager for retail, and Menards was one they needed to track down everything in their warehouse, 2 of my accounts, and I was successful in doubling our 2 and then we wanted them to get ahold of their customers 3 3 business with them. And so I think that those were and get back, you know, as many as they could. And I 4 probably the two main things that made me a good 4 think that we got a fair amount of them back. I think 5 candidate for the job. 5 it was a fairly successful effort, but you never get 6 6 Q So when you say you were national sales them all back, and -- but those are the steps that we 7 7 manager for retail, would that include trying to sell to take, you know, when there's an issue like that, we've 8 Home Depot and Lowe's? 8 become aware of sometimes. 9 9 A Yes. Q So you contacted the wholesalers, and I take 10 Q Okay. Was NIBCO not successful in selling to 10 it, they, in turn, would contact the plumbers and 11 11 contractors? 12 A Well, we -- we've been selling to Menards for 12 A Yeah. The contractors, yes. a long time, and NIBCO sells many of their products to 13 13 Q So if -- let's say someone determined there 14 Home Depot and Lowe's, but at Home Depot and Lowe's, you 14 was a problem with their PEX tubing, a mechanism to 15 know, we -- you know, the way this works is you get a 15 inform people that have that PEX tubing would be done by 16 shot at business, like, once every four years or so when 16 NIBCO contacting the wholesalers, who, in turn, could 17 17 they have a line review, and you get one shot, and if get the word out to builders and plumbers, right? 18 you miss it, you're waiting another four years. So you 18 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 19 know, we get a shot every time, but for whatever reason, 19 A Well, would we -- are you asking me if we 20 20 would follow a similar process if I knew of a defect? I don't know all the details of it, we -- we have not 21 sold into Home Depot and Lowe's. But we sell to Menards 21 O Yes. 22 and we sell into Ace. We have the Ace business in the 22 A It would probably be a similar process.

23

24

25

product, right?

23

24

25

US and a lot of other smaller independent retailers.

Was there an expressed effort to sell the PEX

line of products to Home Depot and or Lowe's by NIBCO?

Q And that would be reasonably effective in

getting out the message to who has the defective

	/4	TO	
	Page 194		Page 196
1	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	1	hat in the ring, and they interviewed me, and the next
2	Q It's just for the record, putting on the	2	thing I know they offered me a job, and I laughed. So
3	record an objection.	3	that's how it happened. I mean, it wasn't there was
4	A We would follow something similar.	4	nothing planned, and I wasn't necessarily looking, but
5	Q Now, I think in your testimony earlier today	5	it just happened.
6	we've established that it was a 1006 product which then	6	Q Okay. And is that where you work now?
7	was arguably upgraded to a 3308?	7	A Yes.
8	A Yes.	8	Q Okay. What's the name of the company?
9	Q And the 3308 would be more appropriate for	9	A It's called Kentucky Trailer.
10	recirculation systems, right?	10	Q Okay. And what's their business?
11	A Yes.	11	A We make trailers, trailer vans for the moving
12	Q So was there ever any consideration of sending	12	and storage industry, and then also specialty fleet
13	out some notice to users or builders that use the 1006	13	applications. So our customers are FedEx and UPS and
14	in a recirculation system that perhaps that pipe would	14	Frito-Lay, companies like that.
15	not be as reliable as a 3308?	15	Q Now, when you were at NIBCO, did you have a
16		16	business e-mail address?
17	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. A No, no.	17	A Yes.
18	Q Now, when did you first become aware of the	18	
	- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		Q And what was that; do you remember what your e-mail was?
19 20	case, the Meadow case? You know what, I'm going to add in the Cole case. These are both national class actions	20	
			A Yes. It was doeringr2@NIBCO.com.
21	regarding PEX products of NIBCO.	21	Q Okay. Did you ever use your private e-mail to do business of NIBCO?
22	A I became aware of the Cole case before I left	22	
23	as general manager, and I the Meadow case, just in	23	A Oh, never.
24	the last week.	24	Q Do you know what the annual revenue of NIBCO's
25	Q Okay. So when you became aware of the Cole	25	PEX business was, you know, from the time it started
	Page 195		Page 197
1	litigation, were there certain steps you took in	1	selling NEXT-Pure until you left?
2	reaction to the litigation?	2	A Yeah, the NEXT-Pure, you know, we sold it for
3	A No, no.	3	a couple of years. I think we probably after two
4	Q Okay. Did you, you know, preserve any files	4	years, we were probably around four million or so, and
5	that you had?	5	then I believe that the CPI acquisition added around 16
6	A Well, we get notices, you know. If if	6	million, and so I think the business has been anywhere
7	there is a pending lawsuit there's a notice that comes	7	from 20 to 25 million.
8	from our legal department that states, you know,	8	Q Okay. If you could take a look at what we've
9	"Please, you know, preserve anything related to this	9	marked as Meadow 46. It's an e-mail that you received
10	case." I'm sure I received one of those notices. So	10	from Mark Clark as a CC to you, and it encompasses Bates
11	yes.	11	numbers 31944 to 31945. The e-mail's dated November 23,
12	Q Okay. Do you know if you got such a notice in	12	2008. If you could take a look at this and tell me if
13	the Christianson case?	13	you recognize this and if you recall receiving it?
14	A Yes.	14	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 46 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)
15	Q Okay. The Pulte case?	15	A Okay.
16	A Yes.	16	Q Okay. Do you recognize this e-mail you
17	Q Okay. Now, did you take any documents with	17	received?
18	you when you left NIBCO?	18	A Yeah, I don't recognize the e-mail, per se,
19	A No.	19	but I do remember this issue.
20	Q Okay. And why did you leave NIBCO?	20	Q Okay. And what was this issue that's
21	A Well, I I was I moved here to	21	reflected in Meadow 46?
22	Louisville, and I was contacted by a headhunter about an	22	A Well, in most states if like, the standard
23	opportunity with a company here in Louisville to be	23	for fittings are it's called F 1807. And so most
24	their vice president of sales and marketing, and it	24	states, if if the tubing, which is F 876 or, no.
25	sounded like a pretty good opportunity, and I threw my	25	Let me take this back. If I've got fittings that have F

Page 198  1 876 stamped on them, and I have a tube that has F 876 on them, then I can marry them. So I could have a tube from Zurn and a fitting from Viega or NIBCO, and I can marry them, in every state in the United States except 4 A Yeah, I kind of, I to the Viega of NIBCO.	Page 200 erns.
<ul> <li>them, then I can marry them. So I could have a tube</li> <li>from Zurn and a fitting from Viega or NIBCO, and I can</li> <li>Q Okay. You recogn</li> </ul>	erns.
<ul> <li>them, then I can marry them. So I could have a tube</li> <li>from Zurn and a fitting from Viega or NIBCO, and I can</li> <li>Q Okay. You recogn</li> </ul>	
3 from Zurn and a fitting from Viega or NIBCO, and I can 3 Q Okay. You recogn	
	nize this document?
	think I remember some of
5 for one. And that's Minnesota. And UPINOR is 5 these discussions.	
6 headquartered in Minnesota. So they've been very 6 Q Okay. And what of	does this concern?
	homeowner that had a fitting
	vere investigating what had
	g failed because of corrosion,
7   11	ng deeper into the application
	using a deionization system in
12 standards people in a different world. There's all 12 the home, and these some	•
1 1	ns, and that's why they stated
achieve here is a system standard for NIBCO that would 14 in the report that the water	
V 1	yed after one year. And so the
	nical people were that in this
	se water conditions, they need
	t is, you know, completely
bottom, he also refers to I guess the issue is 19 resistant to any kind of co	
,	Greg Lehman, the person
21 A Yes. 21 who's sending this e-mail	-
	cal services department. He
23 this period of time in 2008, right?  23 works for Ken McCoy.	our sorvices depurement 110
	ne have particular technical
25 A Well, I mean, what he's you know, what he's 25 training?	To have particular toolingur
Page 199	Page 201
-	
1 saying here, we sold not only brass fittings, but we 2 also sold a poly alloy or a plastic fitting at the same 2 is.	on't know exactly what it
	n praviously marked Vou
4 dezincification and have no lead. And so what he's  4 don't have to mark that. The	on previously marked. You
	you could take a look this,
6 in Minnesota, because there are known issues with brass 6 A Sure.	you could take a look tills,
	sly been marked as Meadow
1	Grant Dow, October 7, 2011.
9 fitting. So that's what he's suggesting there. 9 It's concerning the city of L	
	nize this document and what
the plastic fittings?  11 the plastic fittings?  12 the plastic fittings?	nze tins document and what
12 A Yeah, yeah. We've well, actually what we - 12 A Okay.	
	ember getting this e-mail?
	ue. I don't remember this
producing our own poly alloy fittings. And I think that  15 e-mail exchange.	de. Tuon tremember uns
16 our my feeling, I don't know if it's going to hold 16 Q Which is this e-mail	l exchange?
	a, Los Angeles County has
being, you know, a very popular item.  18 their own plumbing code, a	·
19 Q Okay. Take a look at what we've marked as 19 different country, apart from	
	ornia. And what they wanted,
	is PEX tubing, copper tubing
22 Meadows 117408 through 411. Take a look at this.  22 has the same OD size or ou	
23 (MEADOW EXHIBIT 47 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) 23 thickness of PEX is like thi	
, - 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4	anty, they wanted everyone to go
	ou're running half-inch

Page 202 Page 204 1 1 But I don't -- I don't know how the story ended. But it tubing, and that's the most popular size in a home, 2 looks like there could have been a manufacturing defect they're saying, "We want an opening that's as big as 3 3 copper," so you've got to go up to three-quarter inch. in this case. 4 O Okay. 4 And so this e-mail basically is we're just discussing, 5 you know, is it worth it in -- in Los Angeles county to 5 A But then they also talked about an insulation 6 issue earlier in the e-mail chain, so I don't know how б go through all this testing and approval to get 7 7 something that, one, is meant to perpetuate copper, it all ended. 8 Q I just have one question on the second e-mail, 8 because it will make PEX more expensive because you're 9 9 going to a larger size, and then -- then in Los Angeles the second from the top? 10 (MEADOWS EXHIBIT 49 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) 10 county, and most of its built up, so most of the growth 11 11 in Los Angeles county is remodels and things like that. 12 12 And so what they're saying is we'd be better off Q It's from Debbie Premus to you and some other 13 13 NIBCO people. And she describes a test that she sticking with just getting our product approved in the 14 state of California, because this was in 2011, we were 14 performed at 180 degrees with -- at 360 psi, that the 15 product failed at that level, and she says that's about 15 still waiting for the housing market to recover. So the 16 16 average for a product at this temperature. Am I correct thoughts were let's wait, get the California state 17 approval because the growth is going to be the suburbs. 17 in understanding that the NIBCO pipe can sustain 18 So we were just debating whether we should get an 18 standards well beyond what's printed on the pipe? In 19 19 approval in -- in Los Angeles county. other words, normally it's printed as --20 20 Q Okay. In this first page, it refers in the A Yeah. 21 21 middle of the page, "If we do renew, should the yellow Q -- 180 degrees, 100 psi, but the pipe should 22 be able to sustain more than that, right? 22 brass items come off the list." Is that a concern of 23 23 dezincification of yellow brass that NIBCO was selling? A Yeah. Like, at room temperature, you know, 24 you can -- it wouldn't burst until you hit 850 or 900 24 A Well, yeah, I mean, we knew -- we knew the 25 yellow brass was, you know, going to -- we were going to psi. But these are -- there's like, when we were Page 203 Page 205 1 be getting out of that. So the discussion is, you know, 1 talking about this earlier, PEX is very strong. It can 2 2 we don't want to approve a product that we're going to sustain, you know, an attack, a high increase in 3 3 be eliminating -- that we're in the process of pressure. It's the sustained exposure to pressure over 4 eliminating then. So that's what that referred to. 4 time that will shorten, you know, the life of the 5 5 Q I'm passing to you what's previously been product. It wouldn't burst right away, but it will б marked as Exhibit 15. 6 shorten the life of it. 7 (MEADOWS EXHIBIT 48 MARKED FOR DENTIFICATION) Q Have you ever seen any studies done where it 8 A Thank you. 8 correlates the level of pressure versus the duration of 9 9 Q Which is an e-mail chain that you're in, and the product's life? 10 you're in the top chain as well. We're getting a top e-10 A No, I have not seen any studies on that. 11 mail from Grant Dow. It's dated October 27, 2011, and 11 Q And by that, I don't mean just within NIBCO, 12 tell me if you recognize this document --12 but within the industry? 13 13 A You know, I -- no. No, I'm not aware of any. A Okay. (MEADOW EXIHIBIT 50 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) 14 Q -- and what it concerns. 14 15 Α Okay. 15 MR. DEUTSCH: You'll have to tell me what 16 Do you recognize this? 16 exhibit we're on. Meadow --A I remember when Grant was investigating this, 17 COURT REPORTER: This would be Meadow 50. 17 18 yes. 18 MR. DEUTSCH: 50. 19 Q Okay. And what did this concern? 19 BY MR. DEUTSCH: 20 2.0 A This was -- I believe it was in Tucson, Q Let's take a look another what we've marked as 21 Meadow 50, which is an e-mail chain where you received 21 Arizona, the contract was Spartan Plumbing, and that 22 22 there was a home that had had some leaks. And in the top e-mail From Mark Clark dated March 6, 2012, 23 reading through these e-mails, I guess I'd like to see 23 encompasses Bates numbers Meadows 100873 through 874. 24 the end of the -- I don't remember how the story ended. 24 The subject of the top e-mail is renewal of PEX 25 But there's a lot of different, you know, suspects here. 25 approval, RR 5705. If you could take a look at this

	/4	13	
	Page 206		Page 208
1	document and tell me if you recognize it, and if so,	1	A Yes.
2	what it concerns.	2	Q Mr. Hall, and who's Mr. Hall?
3	A Okay.	3	A Mr. Hall is with WinWholesale. They're
4	Q Okay. And what does it concern?	4	headquartered in Dayton. And I can't remember his
5	A Well, we were working on renewing our PEX	5	title, but he's, like, vice president, you know, he's a
6	approval in the city of Los Angeles, and Mark is our	6	head honcho.
7	standards and codes department, and so he was asking me		Q Okay
8	for some direction on what products we wanted to include		A WinWholesale. This this involves those
9	in that in that renewal. This was in, you know,	9	those Linx fittings with the wrong alloy. And this
10	2012, and so California was either close or in the	10	particular Windustrial branch in Anniston, Alabama, they
11	process of banning yellow brass fittings, you know. And	11	seemed to have been particularly affected by this. And
12	so at the time we had plastic fittings, and then these -	12	unfortunately, they had installed a lot of those
13	- this home-run manifold was an all-plastic manifold	13	fittings, or plumbers that they had sold to had sold
14	that we produced, and he wanted to know if that should	14	those fittings in their area. And so I basically was
15	be included in the approval. And then in the last	15	was sending a report to Bill giving him the status of
16	paragraph he's mentioning that Los Angeles needs test	16	the claims and what we had outstanding and what we were
17	reports, and since we outsource all of our fittings, you	17	doing to take care of their their wholesale
18	know, we don't have access to all of our vendors test	18	distributor in Anniston and, in turn, the plumbing
19	reports, and so it's something that we may be able to	19	contractor customers. So that's what this is about.
20	get, but and I tell you the truth, I can't remember	20	Q Okay. And I take it you were paying them back
21	how we resolved this issue. I think we eventually did	21	in full; is that right?
22	get the Los Angeles approval, but, again, it's a it's	22	A Yes.
23	a regulatory nightmare over there.	23	Q And when it says "insurance review," like, on
24	Q Okay. Then in the last paragraph you mention	24	the spreadsheet?
25	on the first page, what tests were they seeking from	25	A Uh-huh.
	Page 207		Page 209
1			
1	NIBCO where	1	Q What is that referring to?
2	A You know, I'm not I'm not sure. But I I	2	A Well, what what we did here, the process
3	think it may be just some confirmation that that the	3	with this particular customer, you see, you know, a lot
4	product meets an applicable standard.	4	of different addresses and plumbing contractors, and so
5	Q Okay. And you wouldn't routinely get such	5	each one of these was a different PER number. We tried
6	reports transmitted to NIBCO from your suppliers?	6	to keep them separate so that we had a paper trail for
7	A No, no. And I don't know how we got our I	7	each one rather than just throwing them into a big a
8	know that we, before I left, I know I'm pretty sure	8	big bucket. And so this is basically a spreadsheet that
9	that we were close to getting the Los Angeles' approval.	9	we maintained with with each one of these claims.
10	But we may have been able to get those test reports from	10	Now, this as I recall, this particular branch
11	vendors or gotten an exemption from them. I don't know	11	manager, he was a super nice guy, but he wasn't the most
12	how it was resolved, Larry. Thank you.	12	organized in the world, and so there was always you
13	Q If you could take a look at what we've marked	13	know, one of the requirements that we had is that the
14	as Meadow 51, which is an e-mail from you to a person B.	14	defective fittings had to be sent back to us, and
15	Hall. The document encompasses Bates numbers Meadows	15	sometimes he was tardy in doing that and didn't put the
16	132068 through 132070, and then there's a spreadsheet	16	PER number on it, and so it was kind of a nightmare for
17	attached to Meadows 51. Doesn't have Bates numbers,	17	our technical services team at times, and then that
18	just appears to be some native format. So if you could	18	delayed the payment and then got others involved, and so
19	take a look at this and tell me if you recall sending	19	that's what this is about, Larry.
20	this e-mail and what it concerns.	20	Q And when you look on the spreadsheet showing
21	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 51 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATIO)		all the different plumbers involved, was it that they
22 23	A Okay.	22	were the ones that sent in the PER requests, or had
7.3	Q Okay. And do you recognize this document?	23	the
	A Voc	~ 4	A 337-11 T (1.1.1. 1 / 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
24 25	A Yes. Q And you sent this?	24 25	A Well, I think what they were probably doing, they were going to Anniston, and then Anniston, the

Page 210 Page 212 1 that in Alabama there was this concentration of these 1 branch, the WinWholesale branch was handling the 2 paperwork between us and NIBCO. So he was taking care 2 Linx fittings, right? 3 (MEADOW EXHIBIT 52 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) 3 of it through them. Again, it -- this was kind of a --4 A Yes. 4 for whatever reason, it was a hotspot for that 5 5 particular problem. You know, probably not a whole lot Q Now, are you aware of the Mobile, Alabama area 6 being a concentration of complaints with NIBCO PEX 6 of fittings, but caused a lot of, you know, issues that 7 7 we had to take care of, yes. tubing leaks? 8 A Not specifically, no. I just I -- I -- I know 8 Q And the next to the last page it lists the 9 that the southeast and Alabama and Georgia, there's some 9 company, Sunbelt marketing Inc., for each line, and I know you've mentioned them in your testimony today. 10 high pressure, you know, areas. But, no, I'm not 10 11 11 familiar with Mobile being a hotspot, I guess. A Yes. 12 Can you describe their relationship with Q Or other parts of Alabama? 12 Q 13 NIBCO? A No. 13 14 A Well, they are a sales agent that has had a 14 Q Nobody's reported it when you were in charge 15 of PEX? 15 lot of relationship with NIBCO. They're headquartered in Lithia Springs, Georgia, which is right outside of 16 16 A No. 17 17 Atlanta. They're a buy-sell agent, so they buy our Nobody reported to you we're getting a lot products. They have a warehouse, and then they sell to 18 of --18 19 19 our customers in the southeast, and their territory No. Α 20 ranges from South Carolina down to Florida, across 20 -- complaints from --21 Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, up to Louisiana. 21 A No. 22 22 Q How were they different than a wholesaler? 0 -- Alabama? 23 23 A Well, they sell to wholesalers. So they're No, no one's ever said that. Okay. And if you'll take a look at -between NIBCO and the wholesaler. They -- we -- the 24 24 25 original idea was for them to sell to smaller 25 Oh, sure. Page 211 Page 213 1 1 wholesalers that -- where it would be more efficient for Q -- Meadow 52, which encompasses Bates numbers 2 them to take care of them, because they hold local 2 Meadows 46830 to 46831. It's an e-mail chain that you 3 3 stock, and they're smaller customers. But as time has were included in on the first page. Top e-mail is 4 4 December 20, 2012 from Lori Stanger to Ken McCoy, and if gone by, they've taken on some pretty big accounts. But 5 5 they've been selling for us for, gosh, probably 40 or 50 you could tell me if you recognize the part that's 6 redacted, as to what it concerns? 6 years, I'd say. And they've been a partner of ours for 7 7 a long time. In this particular case, they had sold the A Okay. 8 8 fittings or supplied the fittings to Anniston, you know, Do you recognize this e-mail chain? 9 9 A Yeah, I think I remember -- I remember the 10 Q Is there any other organization that is 10 situation. parallel to Sunbelt Marketing's position and its 11 Q And what do you recall about this particular 11 12 relationship with NIBCO? 12 issue? 13 13 A Yeah, there's one other company called David A Well, we had a customer that had some brass 14 Gooding, David Gooding, Incorporated. And they're 14 fittings that failed, and we did an evaluation and, you 15 headquartered in the Boston area. And they handle New 15 know, it's one of those things where we don't know England for us. Now, that's not a big PEX area for us, 16 exactly what was -- what the water conditions were, but 16 17 17 so, you know, they do sell PEX, but they're not -we suspected that something with the water was attacking 18 there's not a lot that they sell up there. 18 the fittings. And so in this case, Matt Power, who is 19 Q Is there any, let's say from Sunbelt Marketing 19 our local area sales manager, and Kate Emery, who was 20 20 the PEX regional sales manager, they wanted to know if reselling to wholesalers, is there any other special 21

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A No.

aspect of the relationship between NIBCO and Sunbelt?

but before we get into that document, I just want to

address one thing you just brought up. You mentioned

Q Before -- I'm going -- I'm showing you now 52,

I'd make a goodwill payment, you know, because this was

very unusual, because we didn't have very many, you

know, problems with the metal fittings. And here's a

water, and we felt that it was -- it would be a good

situation where something is strange happening with the

service.

Q Okay.

BY MR. DEUTSCH:

second?

this concerns.

Page 214

idea for this particular user to switch to the poly alloy fittings. So they had asked if I would pay -- make a goodwill payment of, I don't know, \$500 or so. So I recommended that, and I don't remember exactly what happened after that. I supported it with my team.

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Q Okay. On the second page of this the e-mail seems to refer to Linx. So wouldn't this fit into the issue with the defective Linx fittings that were sold to users?

A Well, you know, we -- we bought a lot of fittings from Linx, so I don't know if here we're referring to those Ts that we talked about where the wrong alloy was installed or if -- because you're saying -- this customer's saying multiple issues with Linx -- with Linx fittings. But it could be -- I don't think this was related to the issue with the wrong alloy that we've been talking about. I think this is just Linx was one of our suppliers, and they -- in this case, they were -- they had fittings from Linx as their supplier.

Q Was there a method to determine which were the bad Linx fittings that were sold to the public?

A Oh yeah, yeah. We knew. We had lot numbers and we knew -- you know, knew the configurations of them. I don't know if this -- I don't think they say here what this fitting is. But as I recall, this was --

2013. If you could take a look at this and tell me what

(MEADOW EXHIBIT 53 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A This involved the -- the Linx fittings with
the wrong alloy in them. We were -- you know, claims
were made, and then we'd get ahold of Linx, and they'd
get ahold of their insurance area. And we were pretty
good at knocking these things off, but with -- with the
number of different people involved and getting samples
and documentation, the insurance carrier wasn't -- they
weren't the best at getting things paid promptly. And
with a lot of these claims, people were getting their

very often, Larry. I -- less than a handful do I

MR. DEUTSCH: Okay.

(OFF THE RECORD)

remember of any metal fittings, you know, failing in

COURT REPORTER: Can we go off for just a

Q So I'd like you to take a look at what we've

sent to you from a Jarrod Brigham dated January 28,

marked as Meadow 53. It encompasses -- it's a one-page

document, Bates number Meadows 130903. It's an e-mail

Page 215

this was a separate issue unrelated to the product exchange that we conducted on the handful of fittings that had the wrong alloy in them. You know, we felt there was something here. We don't know what, but there was something with the water that was causing an attack on things.

Q So when you say it had something to do with the water, was there tests done on the water that determined that it was a water problem rather than a product problem?

A I -- I do not know. I do not know. I think that here, since it's a metal fitting, I think that our -- our technical team looked at it, saw what the corrosion looked like and how long it had been in service and made a determination it was a corrosive water issue.

Q Do you know, did they routinely use some standardized water tests to determine when they would describe a failed fitting to water rather than the product?

A Well, you know, other than -- other than that Linx situation with the fittings with the wrong alloy, this was an extremely rare occurrence. We had -- even though we were selling yellow brass, we had very few problems with fittings, and so it just didn't happen

Page 217

Page 216

money, but they're having to wait, you know, sometimes, you know, a couple of months or longer. And so I think in this -- in this case Jarod, who is in our technical service department, he wanted to, I don't know who this customer is, but someone that had a Linx claim, and he wanted to send something to this customer explaining the delay, and then he apparently asked me to -- to edit it. I don't know what my edits were, because it's just all black, so I don't see my red edits. So I think that this was -- is what this was about.

Q Okay. And the insurance company that's referred to here in the bottom e-mail from Jarod, it's the insurance company of Linx; is that right?

A Correct. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So what we did to kind of mitigate things, if there were small claims, we just went ahead and stuck our neck out and paid them and got reimbursed from Linx' insurance carrier.

Q And by the way, did you have a certain authority of, when you approved a goodwill payment on one of these situations we've looked at, did you have a certain dollar level that you preauthorized?

A No, but I usually -- well, you saw that I had sent it to our attorney, Lori Stanger. I usually had to get her approval or someone from legal, you know, to

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	Page 218		Page 220
1	approve it. But there were no dollar set dollar	1	in two in a year. 500 to 600 million.
2	amounts.	2	Q A year?
3	Q Okay. Is there a set dollar amount to go to	3	A Yeah.
4	Steve Malm?	4	Q By the way, who's Dane Badgero?
5	A No, I don't think we had anything set up. It	5	A He's the sales manager for WinWholesale.
6	just kind of depended on the on the case and the	6	Q And do you know what the total value of the
7	circumstances and	7	Linx claims that came in that were paid by Linx and or
8	Q If you could take a look at what we've marked	8	NIBCO?
9	as Meadow Exhibit 54, and this encompasses Bates numbers	9	A I can't remember the exact number, but, you
10	Meadows 133458 through 464. It's an e-mail chain that	10	know, I think that it was, you know, several hundred
11	you're involved with dated March 7, 2013 e-mail at	11	thousands of claims. You know, maybe as much as
12	the top, and it concerns "Linx Debit Memo," and tell me	12	350,000, something like that, maybe.
13	if you recognize this and what it concerns.	13	Q 350,000?
14	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 54 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATIO	N) 14	A Yeah.
15	A Okay. I can comment on this.	15	Q Okay.
16	Q Okay. What is this?	16	A I I can't remember the exact amount. It's
17	A Well, this is again, this is the Linx	17	just been too far.
18	fittings that had the wrong alloy in them and, again,	18	Q Did Linx remain a supplier of NIBCO during
19	with wholesale, with Nelson this is Evansville with	19	your duration there?
20	Nelson, Evansville, Indiana, they're part of the	20	A They they did. I don't know if they're a
21	WinWholesale, and they had a fairly sizable claim that	21	supplier to us today.
22	hadn't been paid by Linx. And so our vice president of	22	MR. DEUTSCH: Okay. Mark the next one.
23	sales and marketing, Mark Hamilton, went to Chris Mason,	23	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 55 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION
24	who's vice president of supply chain, and said, "Hey,	24	Q If you could take a look at what we've marked
25	you know, they waited a long time. This is starting to	25	as Meadow 55, which is an e-mail chain with you
	Page 219		Page 221
1	be kind of a hot issue, you know. Can can we	1	receiving the top e-mail in a chain from Ken McCoy. It's
2	expedite this somehow?" And, you know, Chris, of	2	concerning a PER and then encompasses Bates numbers
3	course, wants to file a long process that we have, that	3	131364 through 131367. The top of the e-mail chain is
4	meant there was going to be more delays, and so it was	4	from May 29, 2013. Tell me take a look at this, tell
5	just becoming a tough issue with one of our major	5	me if you recognize it.
6	customers. And so it looks like here that Chris	6	A Okay.
7	contacted the Linx CEO, and then they agreed that we	7	Q Do you remember receiving this e-mail?
8	could debit them from their account and then issue a	8	A I don't I don't remember this one, per se.
9	check on WinWholesale. So they expedite the process,	9	Q Do you remember the issue reflected in this e-
10	and then we catch up later when we got the claim from	10	mail chain that you're involved in?
11	Linx. So that's how they resolved that issue.	11	A Well, you know, I think, again, this involves
12	Q Okay	12	the Linx fittings that with the wrong alloy, and in
13	A For WinWholesale's probably one of NIBCO's	13	this case, because it's Dane Badgero, it's probably a
14	top five customers. Very significant account for us.	14	WinWholesale location, and, you know, they want to get
15	Q So when you say "significant," what would be	15	their claim paid, but it looks like they were slow in
16	the level of sales to them in an average year?	16	getting the necessary information and samples back to
17	A Well, there I don't know. Actually, my	17	us, and that's the situation. I'm sure they got paid. I
18	wife handles their account. But I mean, they're	18	don't know exactly when.
19	significant. They're you know, they might be ten	19	MR. SHAMBERG: Can we go off the record for one
20	percent, something like that, of our business.	20	minute while he reads this one?
21	Q Ten percent of NIBCO's business?	21	MR. DEUTSCH: Yeah.
22	A Yeah, possibly.	22	MR. SHAMBERG: Thanks.
23	Q And what's the annual sales of NIBCO's	23	(OFF THE RECORD)
24	business approximately?	24	BY MR. DEUTSCH:
25	A Well well, you know, I haven't been there	25	Q Back on the record with a new court reporter.

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	Page 222		Page 224	
1	So if you could take a look at what we've marked as	1	A Accounts payable.	
2	Meadow 56, which encompasses Bates numbers 116072	2	Q Okay. And then second line from the bottom it	
3	through 73. It's an e-mail chain that you sent an e-	3	says, "Brian Lee. Waiting for Brian Lee to release the	
4	mail to various people on. It concerns a PER number.	4	check." Do you know who he is?	
5	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 56 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATIO		A Yes. He's in our purchasing department, and	
6	A Uh-huh.	6	since he would not be involved since he's in	
7	Q If you could take a look at this, tell me if	7	purchasing, he would not be involved in this unless it	
8	you recognize it and what it concerns?	8	was one of those Linx fitting issues that we've been	
9	A Yes, I recognize it. This was, again, the	9	talking about here, because he was managing that	
10	Linx fittings with the wrong alloy. This is for a	10	those claims. So I I suspect that this was a Linx	
11	wholesale distributor Cregger, pretty large customer. It	11	fitting issue.	
12	likes like there was a delay in getting the fitting	12	Q I see on the first line of the claim it says,	
13	evaluated, and I recommended that we pay make a	13	"Installed February 8, 2011; failed May 31, 2011." So	
14	goodwill payment ahead of the getting the insurance	14	it appears that it failed in three or four months?	
15	claim.	15	A Yes.	
16	COURT REPORTER: Is this 50	16	Q And was that common for the Linx problems,	
17	MR. DEUTSCH: This is 57. Meadow 57.	17	that they failed promptly?	
18	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 57 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION		A Yeah, if they failed, they failed soon after	
19	Q If you could take a look at what we've marked	19	installation.	
20	as Meadow 57. It's a one-page document, Bates number	20	Q Okay. Take a look at what we've marked Meadow	
21	Meadows 117793. Upper left-hand corner it says, "SAP	21	58, which has Bates number Meadows 135196. It looks	
22	notes"; do you know what this document is?	22	like this is an exhibit previously that you may have	
23	A These are notes with that our SAP operating	23	seen, 120, back in year 2015. If you could take a look	
24	system on a particular PER.	24	at this one-page document and tell me if you recognize	
25	Q So if you print it out, this is what it looks	25	it. I mean, it was an e-mail from you.	
		23	·	
	Page 223		Page 225	
1	like for a client?	1	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 58 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)	
2	A Yes.	2	A Yeah, I recognize this.	
3	Q Okay.	3	Q Okay. And what does this concern?	
4	A For an evaluation request.	4	A Well, we were Christianson Plumbing was	
5	Q Okay. Now, in this document on the fourth	5	buying our products, and we had talked to them about	
6	line down it says, "T.0," or, "T.1 material issue"; do	6	coming to Lebanon for a plant tour, and so this was, you	
7	you know what that refers to or what that means?	7	know, for them to come and get a plant tour and see how	
8	A I I mean, I don't know this specific claim.	8	we make PEX tubing.	
9	Q Okay. I'm actually asking: Are those, like,	9	Q Okay. Had they been buying somebody else's	
10	shorthand terms used by NIBCO when considering the	10	PEX products prior to buying NIBCO's?	
11	claims made by buyers of NIBCO products?	11	A Yeah, I think so. I don't remember who, but	
12	A Like, which line are we talking about?	12	yeah, yeah. And I can't remember when they switched to	
13	Q I'm sorry. I'm on the one, two, three, fourth	13	us, but probably earlier that year, you know, that we	
14	line down into these notes.	14	Tom or Doug Kalberer, it was his account, so he may	
15	A Like, the 831-11	15	have conferred with them earlier in the year.	
16	Q Yes.	16	Q Okay. By the way, Mr. Kalberer's territory	
17	A TO material issue?	17	was encompassed what area of the country?	
18	Q Yes.	18	A Just central U.S., you know, from Texas, the	
19	A All I could speculate is that there was an	19	Plains states up to, you know, Wisconsin and Minnesota	
20	issue with the material of this fitting, and then it	20	and the Dakotas.	
21	looks like we paid a claim to the to whoever	21	Q Okay. Did it include Alabama?	
22	submitted this.	22	A No.	
23	Q And the third line from the bottom it says,	23	Q Okay. Now, you state in that e-mail that	
24	"Check request through AP." Do you know what AP refers	24	Christianson is one of the biggest end-users of our	
25	to?	25	product. Do you know how large their amount of	

		10	
	Page 226		Page 228
1	purchases was?	1	Q Okay. Do you know if Christianson is still a
2	A I can't remember. But they were they were	2	customer of NIBCO?
3	a good size customer. You know, they I I can't	3	A I don't know. I'm no longer employed at
4	remember how big they were, though.	4	NIBCO.
5	Q Okay. And you were showing them the plant	5	Q Do you know what the nature of the
6	just to encourage them to use your product; is that	6	installation failure was? If I remember right, I think
7	right?	7	it was something like 57 houses involved; does that
8	A Well, they were already using our product and	8	sound right?
9	it was a just, you know, they we had invited them	9	A Yeah. I think that one of the well, I'm
10	to the plant, and it was a marketing tool used by us.	10	trying to remember, but I you know, I think there
11	Usually when people came and we showed them the	11	were issues with bend radius and handling of of the
12	operation, the E-BEAM, they were usually, you know, very	12	material.
13	impressed with what we were doing and, you know, we felt		Q Could you repeat that?
14	like it really, you know, cemented our relationship and	14	A I think that there were some issues with
15	what we were doing.	15	exceeding the bend radius and general handling of the
16	Q And in your e-mail you say it's in the	16	material, yeah.
17	middle of the e-mail, you say, "You may still be moving	17	Q Okay. When you say "general handling of the
18	equipment in boxes around." What was going on at the	18	material," what are you referring to?
19	plant at this point in time? This is in December of	19	A Well, I I'm well, you know, I don't
20	2008 when you write the e-mail.	20	remember this completely, but I think beyond the bend
21	A We had previously we were leasing space	21	radiuses there were some gouging in the materials is
22	from E-BEAM Services for our extrusion department, and	22	as I recall it. But I think that there were other
23	we had acquired a building across the street, and we	23	issues.
24	were in the process of moving into the new building.	24	Q And, again, you gave testimony in a deposition
25	Q Now, subsequent to this, there was a dispute	25	in that case, right?
	Page 227		Page 229
1	with Christianson Plumbing, right?	1	A Yes.
2	A Yeah, yeah. A few years later.	2	Q Okay. Is there anything in that testimony
3	Q Okay. And they ultimately sued NIBCO, right?	3	that you would change as you sit here today?
4	A Yes.	4	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
5	Q And their allegation was that the NIBCO PEX	5	A No.
6	product was defective, right?	6	Q Okay. If you could take a look at what we've
7	A I'm not familiar with exactly what the claim	7	now marked as Meadow 59. It's a document Bates numbers
8	they were making, but, yeah.	8	134644 through 134648. It's an e-mail chain where
9	Q But you appear as if at least you got deposed	9	you're a recipient of the top e-mail from Debbie Premus
10	in the case, right?	10	dated February 1, 2011. If you take a look at this
11	A Yeah.	11	document and tell me if you recall receiving it while
12	Q Okay.	12	you worked at NIBCO?
13	A Yeah.	13	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 59 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)
14	Q And what was the resolution of that case?	14	A Okay.
15	A I don't know, because I think it was resolved.	15	Q Okay. Do you recognize this e-mail chain that
16	I don't know I don't know how it was resolved. I	16 17	you were a copy of?
17	think I had left NIBCO by the time that was settled.		A Yeah, I do recall some elements of it.
18	Q Okay. Did you ever hear what happened to the	18 19	Q Okay. And I'll let you describe the issues with this.
19	case?	20	A Well, I think this was, you know, before we
20	A No.	21	did gel testing in order to evaluate PEX that had
21	Q Okay. Am I correct the understanding was your	22	that had an oxidative failure. So that this is really
22	contention, you on behalf of NIBCO, that there was no	23	when we started talking about doing more in terms of
23 24	nothing wrong with the product, that it was entirely due	24	evaluating samples, you know, when they when they
2 <del>4</del> 25	to installation that the product failed?  A That's correct.	25	come back rather than just a kind of a visual
40	A That's correct.	2.5	come ouck runter man just a kind of a visual

Page 230 Page 232 1 She's saying, "The location of the failure is only examination. And so this e-mail chain really represents 1 2 2 Texas, again, outside of the expected geographic areas. some of the dialogue that we had about, you know, what 3 3 could we do to better evaluate the samples that came in. And the second Texas complaint received in the last And what happened after this is we made it a standard 4 4 month." So she's referring to outside the expected procedure to send samples to Jana Labs for a gel test to 5 5 geographic areas. Do you know, at this point in time, 6 б determine the degree of cross-linking, and then a couple this is 2011, what the geographic areas that you'd of years ago, we went even further and purchased our own 7 7 expect failures to be in? 8 equipment that would allow us to do a gel test 8 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 9 evaluation. 9 A I don't know what she's referring to there in 10 10 Q So a gel test evaluation, after that point in that statement. 11 time, was consistently done for products that came in 11 Q Well, if we flip to the last page of this 12 for a seemingly oxidative failure? 12 exhibit, Meadow 59, and the last page it says, "The MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. first is that the customer, Winnelson, is in the 13 13 14 A Well, I -- I think we did it on those. I 14 Lebanon, Missouri area rather than the Charlotte and don't know if it was limited only to those, but it was 15 Mobile areas in which we have been seeing this kind of 15 16 -- it was part of the evaluation. failure," and she's referring to oxidative-type failure? 16 17 Q So do you do it to all PEX piping that was 17 A Uh-huh. 18 submitted to NIBCO by the end-user? 18 Q So does that indicate to you that those were 19 A Once we started the procedure, I think we 19 problem areas, Charlotte, Mobile at least? 20 certainly did it when we -- when we thought that -- when 20 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 21 we saw evidence of oxidative failure. You know, we 21 A Well, she seems to be indicating that, that 22 would check the gel to make sure that we, you know, had 22 Charlotte and Mobile were areas where we had seen a 23 the -- had the necessary cross-linking in the tubing, 23 failure like that. 24 24 Q Okay. Do you have reason to disagree with 25 And the reason you started doing it at that 25 her, that those were areas that had oxidative failures Page 231 Page 233 1 reported to NIBCO? 1 point in time was why? 2 A Well, you know, Debbie would look at things 2 A Well, we've talked about the CPI pipe in the 3 3 like the swell of the -- of the tubing, which is the Charlotte area that was -- you know, where the water difference in the dimensions, you know, which was 4 pressure issues were. So that's not surprising. You 4 5 5 returned versus those which it was sent, you know, had mentioned Mobile earlier, so I guess that that had 6 б because it was -- sometimes that was an indicator. But been, I guess, a hotspot. 7 7 it was all based on visual inspections, and I felt like Q Do you know if anybody ever investigated what 8 8 we needed something more data driven, more definitive the root cause of failures in Mobile were? 9 9 tests. And so in the e-mail, we're talking about, you A In Mobile, specifically? 10 know, doing gel testing. And then we also talked about 10 Q Yeah, Mobile, Alabama? 11 a UV test, because UV can -- if PEX tubing's left 11 A I don't recall any. 12 outside for too long, it could lose some of its Q So on page 134646, at the bottom Debbie Premus 12 properties due to UV. So we were looking at a test for is again sending an e-mail to you and other NIBCO 13 13 14 that as well. 14 people, and she's referring to several years ago when we 15 Q Okay. Is it fair to say that NIBCO concluded 15 were trying to determine the root cause of the CPI gel tests, based upon getting input from customers, that 16 problem. Is that what you're referring to? 16 the product was failing in certain locations? 17 17 A Which paragraph? 18 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 18 Q I'm sorry. Very bottom of Meadow's Bates 19 A No, no. It was -- had nothing to do with 19 number 134646? 20 locations. We were, you know, we just felt that that 20 A Yes. 21 was a tool that we ought to use to evaluate whether we 21 Q Debbie Premus is sending you an e-mail on 22 were meeting, you know, the requirements of the product. 22 January 25, 2011? A Yes. 23 you know. 23



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Q So what I'm looking at is in the very first

top of the e-mail. Debbie Premus is writing to you.

Q Where she's referring to "several years ago

when we were trying to determine the root cause of the

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Page 234

1 CPI problem and the results were all over the map, some 2 low and some higher than even our average today. The 3 low versus high result seem to correspond to the E-BEAM 4 dose history, and I'm expecting the NEXT-Pure sample 5 will likely pass based on the MRad dose being given at the time." So what's your understanding of the CPI 6 7 problem she's referring to of several years before? So she's writing in 2011 that she's referring to a few

A Well, I'm not exactly sure what she's referring to here.

years prior to that.

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Q On the prior page, 134645, there's an e-mail from Ken McCoy to you and other NIBCO people, January 26, 2011 where he's discussing the proposal to do more testing. He says, "If it costs some money upfront to find out how to better identify these sorts of issues and to be able to definitively say such issues are not NIBCO's responsibility as a manufacturer, then it will be well worth it in the long run, in my opinion." Is your understanding that Mr. McCoy, his view was to come up with a basis to say it wasn't NIBCO's manufacturing problem that was causing some of these oxidative failures referred to in the Meadows 59?

Page 235

that we met the requirements, and that would be the case for either paying for someone to check the gel test on the outside or do it ourselves.

A No, I think he -- I think he wants to confirm

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

Q Again, at the top of the e-mail Debbie Premus writes to you, and in the second paragraph she says, "The second sample, Terracotta PEX crimped to a brass Tee, definitely has an oxidative-type crack." Do you have an understanding of why she's referring not just to the Terracotta PEX but also the brass T in that context?

A Well, I think, in this case, she's just identifying the sample of the -- sometimes people would send in samples. It was just the tubing and sometimes there'd be a fitting attached. So she's using this to describe the sample she received.

Q Now, down at the bottom of the first page, Meadow 59, you wrote an e-mail to various people, January 27, 2011, and you cite information to Doug Grant as to how Uponor evaluates tubing failures.

A Yeah.

Q Now, is that something that you then had implemented?

A Well, we didn't do what-- what Uponor was doing. You know, they did kind of a -- they had some quick test where they exposed the tubing to a chemical agent and did kind of a swag to determine whether it had Page 236

Page 237

been properly cross-linked or not. What -- what we ended up doing is we sent samples to Jana Labs, and then they would conduct the gel test. And then eventually we invested and got our own equipment. We were never able to come up with a UV test.

Q When you use the term "swag" in that context, what do you mean?

A Oh, swag. It's a slang word for -- not precise. It was just kind of, I think, you know, just a cheap test to do a quick evaluation, whereas what we were doing would give us a very specific crosslink percent number.

Q Okay. At this time when you were assessing the test you might do in house for NIBCO's PEX products, was there some consideration to come up with a test protocol for fittings and clamps?

A Well, no, because, you know, we had -- we had, you know, good people. We had a metallurgist. It's different than plastics. You know, we were fairly, you know, pretty good at evaluating fittings and clamp

Q If you could take a look at what was previously marked as Exhibit 17 in the Meadows case. It's an e-mail chain that you were a recipient on. It's Bates -- oh, okay. It's Exhibit 17. It's not the next

one. Could you tell me if you recognize this document and what it concerns?

A Okav.

Q Do you recognize this e-mail chain that you received?

No, I don't remember this specific one.

Okay. Do you recall what this is about?

Well, we suspect that there was UV exposure, and so we're asking for additional testing to be conducted.

Q Okay. In Doug Grant's e-mail that he copied you on February 4, 2011, he says, "I would suggest we proceed with the gel test, knowing the amount of crosslinking, and the sample is important information for our area associates to have when dealing with an atypical failure." Would you agree with that statement by Grant, Doug?

A Well, not knowing all the details of the case, I don't see any -- any harm in doing that.

Q Okay. That's a -- an important test, the gel test, to determine cross-linking in a product, right?

MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.

Q Would you agree with that?

A Well, we test -- we test when we produce products. We test for gel testing before it leaves, so



	/421			
	Page 238		Page 240	
1	yes.	1	A I you know, I don't recall. I don't think	
2	Q You think it's an important component?	2	this is a broadcast letter. I think we sent this to	
3	A Sure.	3	some customers, and I don't really remember who we	
4	Q And it shows whether it can indicate	4	who we sent it to. But I think that this is just, you	
5	whether or not the product was produced properly and	5	know, just a letter intended to, you know, promote our	
6	meets the standards for certification, right?	6	PEX product line.	
7	A Uh-huh.	7	Q Okay. And you titled it to, "Dear valued	
8	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	8	customers," so it wasn't like a broad mailing that you	
9	Q And in this e-mail from Doug Grant that he	9	did?	
10	sent to you, he refers to it, something as an atypical	10	A Well, I don't remember this being a broad	
11	failure. So I'm wondering, is there something you would	11	mailing. I think that it was a few that was just sent	
12	characterize as typical failures of the Del PEX tubing	12	to some I think that this was just something we put	
13	products?	13	together that if the salespeople wanted to give this to	
14	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	14	one of our customers they you know, they had the	
15	A No, I really no, I don't really recall	15	option of doing it. We did not do a broadcast of this,	
16	this, and I don't know what it looked like or what	16	I'm pretty sure.	
17	what had happened. But, you know, our technical people	17	Q Was this in reaction to something that	
18	obviously had some concerns about it.	18	happened, or just part of a marketing	
19	Q If you could take a look at what's been	19	A I don't think so. No, it was just part of a -	
20	previously marked as Meadow 16 in an e-mail chain that	20	- it was just kind of a selling piece to point out, you	
21	you're in the middle of, and tell me if you recognize	21	know, what the what the strengths of our product line	
22	this e-mail chain that you were sent, and if so, what it	22	were.	
23	concerns?	23	Q Now, in this letter on the first page, you use	
24	A Okay.	24	the term "aggressive water." How would you define that	
25	Q Do you recognize this document?	25	as you intended it to be used in the context?	
	Page 239		Page 241	
1	A Well, I don't I don't specifically yeah,	1	A Well, you know, we talked about this earlier.	
2	I kind of have a general knowledge of this, what it is.	2	NIBCO led the charge to move away from yellow brass, and	
3	Q What do you recall about this?	3	so aggressive water, in this case, is just a general	
4	A Well	4	term for water that can corrode yellow brass fittings.	
5	Q This PER and how it was handled?	5	Q Was are any parameters that would define	
6	A This is similar to what we, you know,	6	what aggressive water is as you've used in this specific	
7	discussed before, you know, we were looking for a way to	7	letter?	
8	do some additional testing, and then in this particular	8	A No, because it varies from from area to	
9	case, we we sent the sample to Jana to confirm that	9	area.	
10	it met the minimum gel requirements.	10	Q Okay. On the second page of this letter you	
11	Q And you're saying that it did in this case?	11	sent on May 18, 2011 you say, "Our manufacturing	
12	A Yes.	12	facility is ISO 9001 compliant." Could you explain what	
13	Q And therefore, you rejected the claim as not	13	that involves?	
14	being a factory defect?	14	A Well, ISO is an organization that looks at	
15	A Correct. Or our technical people did.	15	your quality system and then grants you a certification,	
16	Q Okay. If you could look at what we've marked	16	and so what we're trying to say here is that, you know,	
17	as Meadow 60, which is a two-page document with Bates	17	our plant, you know, meets the highest quality	
18	numbers Meadows 6301 through 6302. It's a May 18, 2011	18	standards.	
19	NIBCO letter that you signed. It's dated May 18, 2011.	19	Q And how do you achieve this ISO 9001?	
20	Just take a look at this and tell me if you recognize	20	A Oh, yeah, yeah. There's an outside firm that	
21	this letter that you apparently sent?	21	comes in and conducts an audit of the quality systems.	
22	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 60 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATIO)		Q What aspects do they look at of NIBCO's PEX	
23	A Yes, I recognize it.	23	business?	
24	Q Okay. And why did you send this letter at	24	A Well, I've never actually been part of the	
25	this point in time, May 18, 2011?	25	audit, but I think they look at the systems that you	

	Page 242		Page 244
1	have in place and your quality manual and your systems	1	marked as Meadow 61, which encompasses Bates numbers
2	and just everything involving your quality system.	2	134691 through 134697 in the Meadows case. And it's an
3	Q And why do you tout that in your letter?	3	e-mail chain that you're participating in or a
4	A Because most companies do. Even at my most	4	participant in. The date of the e-mail is June 22,
5	recent employer, we just got ISO certified for 2000	5	2011, e-mail from Ken McCoy to you concerning the NIBCO
6	it was 2014. And so marketing people typically tout	6	contact form. If you could take a look through this and
7	those things, because you want your customers to think	7	tell me if you recognize this e-mail that you were
8	that, you know, your your quality control mechanisms	8	copied on?
9	are are very high and most recently audited according	9	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 61 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION
10	to the latest standards.	10	A Okay.
11	Q Is there a set of printed standards for ISO	11	Q Okay. Do you recognize this e-mail chain that
12	9000 compliance?	12	you were involved in?
13	A I don't know. You know, it involves	13	A Well, I don't I don't remember this one, to
14	operations you know, your operations. It's not a	14	tell you the truth.
15	product standard. It's it's an audit of your	15	Q Okay. Do you have memory of addressing the
16	procedures, you know, that you have in a plant or a	16	complaint of this person, looks like Jeff Deacon is the
17	facility. So there's a lot of companies that probably	17	person complaining about the tubing he got from NIBCO?
18	aren't ISO compliant, and that's why ones that are ISO	18	A No, I don't, and I don't know how this was
19	compliant like to you know, just a way to brag a	19	resolved.
20	little bit, I suppose.	20	Q Okay. And you just answered my question. I
21	Q Okay. Now, in your letter in the Meadow 60	21	was going to ask you that, how it was resolved. If you
22	May 18, 2011 letter, you state in the bottom paragraph	22	could turn to NIBCO Meadows page 134695?
23	on the first page, "To our knowledge, we're the only PEX	23	A Yes.
24	manufacturer in North America that 100 percent tests its	24	Q And this is an e-mail Jeff Deacon is sending
25	tubing to ensure that it's free of the tiniest devoid in	25	to NIBCO personnel, specifically Jarrod Brigham within
	Page 243		Page 245
1	the tubing wall." So am I correct in understanding that	1	the e-mail, and he says, "I can e-mail you pictures if
2	NIBCO would test every inch of its tubing?	2	you need them, but I'm sure you know what I'm talking
3	A Yeah. Yeah. We would yes, we did.	3	about due to what I have read about this problem on the
4	Q Okay. And the test that would apply to every	4	
5		_	Internet. From what I can tell, this is a major problem
J	inch of the tubing would be what?	5	throughout the United States with your product. Please
6	inch of the tubing would be what?  A An air test.		v -
		5	throughout the United States with your product. Please
6	A An air test.	5 6	throughout the United States with your product. Please let me know what my next step needs to be." So do you
6 7	<ul> <li>A An air test.</li> <li>Q An air test. Blowing air into the</li> <li>A Yes.</li> <li>Q tube</li> </ul>	5 6 7	throughout the United States with your product. Please let me know what my next step needs to be." So do you have an understanding whether anybody at NIBCO took a look at the Internet to see what the level of complaints about NIBCO products were?
6 7 8	<ul><li>A An air test.</li><li>Q An air test. Blowing air into the</li><li>A Yes.</li></ul>	5 6 7 8	throughout the United States with your product. Please let me know what my next step needs to be." So do you have an understanding whether anybody at NIBCO took a look at the Internet to see what the level of complaints about NIBCO products were?  MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
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6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	A An air test. Q An air test. Blowing air into the A Yes. Q tube A Uh-huh. Q and then seeing if any air comes out? A Correct. Q And that would help determine whether or not the tubing shipped out of the plant had any hole in it at that moment, right? A Correct. Q Okay. It wouldn't necessarily determine whether or not once the tubing's installed, whether or not it had some latent defect that could cause it to leak?  MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. Q Right? A Well, it would evaluate the condition of the	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	throughout the United States with your product. Please let me know what my next step needs to be." So do you have an understanding whether anybody at NIBCO took a look at the Internet to see what the level of complaints about NIBCO products were?  MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.  A Well, I will tell you this. You know, almost every PEX company's been sued for something. And there is a lot of stuff on the Internet, but you really don't know who the manufacturer is a lot of the times, and it could be multiple manufacturers. So I don't know what he's referring to here, you know, specifically. But I don't I don't think I don't believe there's anything on the Internet stating that we had problems all over the United States. I never saw that.  Q Now, you mentioned that you understood that other PEX manufacturers had also been sued. Is it your understanding they were sued due to the PEX piping?  A I think I think well, many have been
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	A An air test. Q An air test. Blowing air into the A Yes. Q tube A Uh-huh. Q and then seeing if any air comes out? A Correct. Q And that would help determine whether or not the tubing shipped out of the plant had any hole in it at that moment, right? A Correct. Q Okay. It wouldn't necessarily determine whether or not once the tubing's installed, whether or not it had some latent defect that could cause it to leak?  MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. Q Right?	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	throughout the United States with your product. Please let me know what my next step needs to be." So do you have an understanding whether anybody at NIBCO took a look at the Internet to see what the level of complaints about NIBCO products were?  MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.  A Well, I will tell you this. You know, almost every PEX company's been sued for something. And there is a lot of stuff on the Internet, but you really don't know who the manufacturer is a lot of the times, and it could be multiple manufacturers. So I don't know what he's referring to here, you know, specifically. But I don't I don't think I don't believe there's anything on the Internet stating that we had problems all over the United States. I never saw that.  Q Now, you mentioned that you understood that other PEX manufacturers had also been sued. Is it your understanding they were sued due to the PEX piping?

Page 246 Page 248 And concerning which companies? 1 1 problem? A I don't remember which ones, but I know that 2 A Well, we -- we changed our installation manual 2 3 there's a lot of -- there's been a lot of litigation out 3 and put, you know, new guidelines in. 4 4 Q Okay. And when did that happen? 5 Q Okay. And what conclusion do you draw from 5 A You know, in the post-2010 timeframe is when that when you see other litigation relating to PEX 6 6 we, you know, started doing that. 7 tubing? 7 Q Okay. So people prior to 2010 wouldn't have 8 8 had any notice then that NIBCO's view is that high A Just, you know, the things that I've seen, you 9 9 know, through the years. I know that Uponor was sued, pressure water can cause a pipe to fail prematurely --10 10 and Viega was sued, and Zurn was sued, so there's been a MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 11 lot of lawsuits. 11 O -- right? Q Do you know if that was concerning the tubing 12 A Well, I don't -- I don't know. You know, we 12 13 or the fittings? 13 do know that there were a lot of houses installed 14 A I -- well, I -- I really don't recall exactly 14 without pressure relief valves, a lot of houses in the 15 what -- you know, what it was. But I know that there 15 country in -- where no expansion tanks were installed, was someone that was sued because of the tubing, but I 16 16 and we have evidence of municipalities warning, you can't remember who it is right now. know, people about high water conditions in their house 17 17 18 Q If I told you that my law firm had been 18 and making sure pressure relief valves were in working 19 contacted by 900 different people who have said they had 19 order, so you know, it doesn't -- it doesn't affect how -- I know what the quality of our product was, so it 20 leaks from a NIBCO tubing, would that in any way change 20 21 your view of whether or not the product has a problem? 21 doesn't affect how I view that. 22 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 22 Q Besides your reference to San Antonio 23 A Well, there again, some people -- you know, 23 apparently disclosing that it might have high water most people don't even know whose PEX they have, so you 24 24 pressure, were there other localities that have warned 25 know, that does not mean much to me. 25 their customers that they have high water pressure? Page 249 Page 247 1 Q Okay. If I told you, this is an 1 A You know, I -- I don't know if I know of any approximation, 900 people have represented to us that 2 others, but I know that there's some municipalities that 2 3 3 they have NIBCO PEX tubing that leaks, does that in any should. 4 way change your view of whether or not there's a problem 4 Q You mean, that you know that they have high 5 with the product? 5 water pressure? 6 A Yes. 6 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 7 And you know that from what source? 7 A Look, we sell -- or I'm not part of NIBCO 8 8 anymore, but, you know, we would sell anywhere from 50 A Just from, you know, evaluating houses, you 9 9 know, in that area. to 75 million feet a year, and that's a lot, and I don't 10 -- I know nothing about these 900 cases. I don't know 10 Is there any --11 if they're truly NIBCO complaints or not. 11 It doesn't mean that they all are that way, 12 Q Let's say they -- it turned out that they were 12 but... bona fide complaints. They were NIBCO product and there 13 Q Is there any source that somebody can go to 13 and would show what the -- what pressures are on various 14 was a common leak. Would that give you some pause that 14 15 there may be something wrong with the pipe? 15 municipalities across the United States? 16 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 16 A No. It's really the responsibility of the 17 homeowner to check their water pressure. 17 A We've -- you know, we have talked about the 18 18 high water pressure conditions throughout the country, Q Okay. If you could look at what we've marked 19 so you know, I don't know. That number, it's abstract 19 as Meadow 62. This is another e-mail chain that you 20 were vetted in. This one encompasses Bates numbers 20 to me right now. 21 Meadows 135068 through 135070. And the topic is 21 Q Okay. Well, that's an interesting point you 22 22 raised. Once NIBCO became aware that there's a concern "Talking Points," and then I ask you to take a look at 23 this. Tell me if you recognize this document and, if 23 or NIBCO has a concern that high water pressure causes failure in the pipe, were there any specific actions 24 so, what it concerns. 24 25 (MEADOW EXHIBIT 62 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION) 25 that NIBCO took to help ameliorate that perceived

Page 250 Page 252 1 1 I'm trying to remember what the issue was here. A Yes, I recognize this. 2 2 Okay. And what does this concern? Q Okay. Now, on the first page is an e-mail 3 3 A Well, our product manager, Tom Coe, wrote an from you to various people, Wednesday, November 5, 2012, 4 you state, "Following is a draft of the technical report 4 e-mail with some talking points, where he's talking 5 about our new formulation, which was going to be 5 that I asked Earl to put together to help quell the 5006 б б launched soon, and just some things were, you know, issue concern." What is that about? 7 7 happening that -- that were, you know, affecting, you A I'm not sure. What I don't understand is that 8 know, PEX tubing applications. 8 if you look at pages 32042 and 32043, this is not 9 9 Q And the top e-mail, Kathleen Emery is sending written by Earl. There must have been an attachment to Doug at MRK Sales a copy of the e-mail. Now, who is 10 10 that was Earl's, and this is -- this looks like this is 11 11 something from this Dr. Frank Volgstadt is what I'm Doug at MRK Sales? 12 12 A Doug, we had some manufacturer's reps that thinking. And then I had asked Earl to write something 13 sold for us, and MRK sold for us in Texas. 13 to -- because we may have been getting some questions 14 Q They were a wholesaler? 14 about this -- this other article. A No, they were a manufacturer's rep. We paid 15 Q I'm sorry, the other article being what? 15 16 them a commission to sell for us, yes. 16 A I mean, at the top of 32042, I guess I don't 17 Q And she says in her e-mail, "I just wanted you 17 recognize this as something that Earl would write, and 18 to know that there is a team working on this 1006 issue. 18 I'm thinking that maybe what he wrote was an -- had an -19 We'll get through this," she says, in bold or in 19 - was an attachment. And, in fact, there's attachment 20 capitals, "I promise you," and she puts four exclamation 20 here at the top. I don't know. I just don't -- I guess 21 points. What's your understanding of what she was 21 I don't remember much about this, to tell you the truth, 22 22 referring to where she says "the 1006 issue," when she's Larry. 23 writing in July of 2012? 23 Q At the top of the third page of 32043 it A I don't know. I'm assuming that she had an 24 24 reads, which appears to be an e-mail from Earl to you 25 issue with -- or Doug maybe had an issue with a customer 25 where he says, "A review of domestic municipal order Page 253 Page 251 1 who's asking some questions about 1006. And, you know, 1 suppliers finds that a majority add chlorine at levels 2 2 as I mentioned earlier, you know, there was some of 1.0 to 1.5 parts per million in a treatment plant. 3 3 pressure on us to get a higher recirc product, so I'm And average from municipal water suppliers average 4 only speculating what she would be commenting about 4 chlorine concentration at the treatment plant is 1.1 5 5 parts per million." Then it goes down to say, "One 6 б MR. KUHLMAN: Could we go off the record for study suggests that the chlorine levels at 1.3 parts per 7 7 just a second? million at the treatment plant chlorine levels will be 8 8 MR. DEUTSCH: Sure. between .1 and .5 part per million of the majority of 9 9 (OFF THE RECORD) the residents who are served by that plant." So is that 10 BY MR. DEUTSCH: 10 section relative to concentrations producing its 11 Q And if you could take a look at this Meadow 11 NIBCO --Exhibit 11, which was an e-mail chain, again. This 12 12 A Yeah. Well, I think -time, at the top, you received an e-mail from Thomas Coe 13 13 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 14 dated September 5, 2012. It's an e-mail chain 14 A Well, I think what he's trying to say here is 15 concerning "effect of chlorine concentration upon PEX 15 that the chlorine used in the actual testing of PEX 16 ESTMF2023 extrapolating times to failure. So will you tubing is much higher than what the levels of chlorine 16 17 take a look at this and tell me if you recognize this 17 you would see in an actual application, I guess is what 18 document that we received and what it concerns? 18 he's trying to say. 19 Admittedly, there's a number of blank pages in this 19 Q Well, at the low levels that's described in 20 exhibit. That's just the way it was produced by NIBCO 20 here, when it's in the residences, would you agree that 21 in their production. 21 normally chlorine wouldn't be part of what you might 22 A Okay. I think I'm ready. 22 define as aggressive water? 23 Q Okay. You recognize this e-mail chain that 23 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. 24 24 you were involved in? A Well, I -- I don't know. We've been talking a

25

25

A Well, not exactly -- well, a little, a little.

lot about aggressive water. I don't know exactly what

	74	<u> 25 </u>	
	Page 254		Page 256
1	that means, other more the effect, and I think we	1	rating. If you could take a look at this and tell me if
2	talk about that more in terms of metal fittings. But I	2	you recognize this document and, if so, what it
3	think what Earl was was trying to do here is, you	3	concerns?
4	know, talk about PEX in general, that it's tested at	4	A Okay.
5	very high chlorine levels. The testing that we do is	5	Q Okay. Do you recognize this e-mail that
6	is much more stringent than anything that a you know,	6	A Yes.
7	a consumer would see in their home. So I think that's	7	Q NIBCO produced?
8	what he's trying to get across here.	8	A Yeah, I remember this.
9	Q And then would it also be true of temperatures	9	Q And what does this concern?
10	and pressures for the	10	A Well, at the time, Viega and Zurn, they were
11	A Right.	11	trying to tell customers that 5006 tubing had was
12	Q testing that you put on the pipe, right? So	12	better than 3 or 1, and they were using this, you know,
13	the pipe should be able to withstand higher pressures	13	to get people to switch from using our product to
14	and temperatures than actually	14	theirs, and so this was a response to to some of
15	A Well, the testing is	15	those actions by our competitors.
16	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. Let's try to	16	Q Did NIBCO ever consider legal action for the
17	keep the question, answer.	17	way you're characterizing as Viega and Zurn
18	A I'm sorry. The tests are tests to failure, so	18	exaggerating the distinction between the products?
19	there's no relationship between what you're testing it	19	A No.
20	to and and what it can withstand, because the tests	20	Q This is 63.
21	are you're testing it until it fails.	21	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 63 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION
22	Q Okay.	22	A Thank you.
23	A So the testing's going to require very high.	23	Q So if you can take a look at what we've marked
24	Q Well, would you agree, then, when you look at	24	as Meadow 63. It's a one-page document with Meadows
25	NIBCO piping, it has parameters that are printed on the	25	Bates number 112090. It's an October 24, 2012 letter on
	Page 255		Page 257
1	piping, right? It has temperature and pressure	1	NIBCO letterhead addressed to whom it may concern,
2	A Yes.	2	signed by John McActee, senior technical services
3	Q limits, right? But you would agree that	3	advisor. Have you ever seen this document before?
4	the pipe should be able to perform even above that level	4	A Yes.
5	based upon the kind of safety factor you build into the	5	Q Okay. Were you involved in approving this
6	pipe, right?	6	letter to go out?
7	A No.	7	A I think I may have been involved in some of
8	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	8	the earlier drafts, not this one.
9	Q No? You're saying if the pipe reads 180	9	Q Okay. And what was the purpose of this
10	degrees, 100 pounds of water pressure, if you go 185	10	letter?
11	degrees and 105 pounds per square inch of pressure, you		A Well, this is a letter that was sent if
12	think that the pipe would fail?	12	someone sent us a claim and it was for tubing or
13	A I think what I said in some previous	13	fittings or anything that was manufactured and sold by
14	statements was that it could withstand that pressure and	14	Consolidated Plumbing Industries. It's just basically
15	temperature combination short-term. But that if you	15	stating that that product was now produced by NIBCO.
16	expose tubing to that over time, it would shorten the	16	Q Okay. And I see in the first sentence of the
17	life of the tubing. It wouldn't have immediate failure,	17	letter is says, "NIBCO purchased substantially all the
18	but it would shorten the life of the tubing. It	18	assets of the Warren Group." What assets of the Warren
19	wouldn't last 50 years.	19	Group didn't NIBCO buy?
20	Q It wouldn't last 50 years?	20	A I don't know. I don't know the answer to
21	A Yeah, that's what I that's what I	21	that.
22	Q All right. Let's take a look at what we've	22	Q At a minimum, it acquired substantially all of
23	previously marked as Meadow Exhibit 12. And this is	23	the assets according to this letter, right?
24	another e-mail chain with you and, at the top, Thomas	24	A Yes.
25	Coe sent you an e-mail, and then his concern's chlorine	25	Q Okay. And so this letter's being sent out in
	just and man mis concerns entorme		Timy. Time so this fetter a some some out in

		20	
	Page 258		Page 260
1	2012 after NIBCO's acquisition of CPI or its assets as	1	product project, we have a tollgate process that we go
2	of 2006. So six years after the acquisition, what was	2	through. And the Tollgate 5 is I think it's 90 days
3	the remedy of a CPI owner of a CPI piece of tubing that	3	after a product has been launched, and we just do a
4	didn't work? What where could they get some relief	4	review to see if there's been any learnings or any
5	or satisfaction of a problem with their piping?	5	insights into how the project went. And so that's why I
6	A Well, we had another letter that we would give	6	sent this e-mail to David.
7	to people to that we had information on the Warren	7	Q Okay. One of the aspects here is how are
8	Group's insurance carrier, and claims could be submitted	8	sales going of the new product; is that right?
9	to them.	9	A Uh-huh.
10	Q Okay. And that insurance policy accepted	10	Q Now, did NIBCO routinely measure what the
11	claims from 2006 until what time period?	11	level of inventory of its distributors was on a regular
12	A I don't know. I don't know when it I'm	12	basis? By distributors, I mean the wholesalers, Sunbelt
13	thinking at some point it ended, but I don't know	13	Marketing, other
14	exactly when.	14	A Their inventory?
15	Q Okay. Now, do you have who determined that	15	Q Their
16	NIBCO had no accountability for the prior CPI-installed	16	A The inventory of wholesale
17	piping after NIBCO acquired CPI or CPI's assets, as you	17	Q Your, NIBCO's
18	would say?	18	A No.
19	A Well, that was a legal determination, and I	19	Q Did it evaluate how fast something is selling,
20	don't to tell you the truth, I don't know exactly	20	the end-user?
21	who, you know, made that decision.	21	A No. All we had was the sales information of
22	Q Okay. Who communicated that to you?	22	what we sold to them directly.
23	A I don't recall. I mean, it it's, you know,	23	Q So if you can take a look at what's now been
24	we had been that had been our position really since	24	marked Meadow 64, encompasses a two-page document with
25	the beginning of the acquisition of the assets, that we	25	Bates numbers Meadows 32749 through 32750. It's an e-
	Page 259		Page 261
1	didn't that we did not, you know, purchase the	1	mail chain with the top being a e-mail from Thomas Coe
2	liabilities of the company, and so it was a consistent	2	to you dated June 25, 2013. Tell me if you recognize
3	policy that, you know, we did not recognize claims for	3	this e-mail and what it concerns.
4	CPI product.	4	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 64 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)
5	Q Do you know do you have any idea how many	5	A Okay.
6	CPI claims came into NIBCO that NIBCO rejected as being	6	Q Okay. And what is do you remember getting
7	CPI claims and not NIBCO's responsibility?	7	this e-mail?
8	A I I don't know what the exact number was.	8	A Yeah, I remember this.
9	Q Do you know if it's more than 100?	9	Q Okay. And what does it concern?
10	A I'd be very surprised if it's more than 100.	10	A Well, at the end of this chain or at the
11	Q Previously marked.	11	beginning of the chain, rather, Matt Dennis is the
12	A Thank you.	12	senior buyer at Menards, and he was inquiring about 5306
13	Q If you could take a look at what's been	13	tubing and if he can get it from NIBCO. And so this
14	previously marked as Exhibit 33 in the Meadow case. This	14	Travis Malnar is we have retail manufacturer's reps
15	is an e-mail chain where you're the sender of the top e-	15	as well, who sell and get a commission from us. This
16	mail. It's from March 21, 2103 e-mail you're sending	16	Travis helps us sell to Menards stores, and Tom had put
17	with the subject "Tollgate 5 for the PEXc reformulation	17	together this had put together this draft of a
18	project." So if you could take a look at this and tell	18	response to Travis' question.
19	me if you recognize this e-mail you sent and what it	19	Q And he is raising an issue of your competitors
		20	are using or had created a product that had a 5 rating
20	concerns?		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
21	A Okay.	21	for chlorine resistance,
21 22	A Okay. Q Okay. Do you recognize it?	22	A Yeah.
21 22 23	<ul><li>A Okay.</li><li>Q Okay. Do you recognize it?</li><li>A Yes.</li></ul>	22 23	A Yeah. Q right?
21 22	A Okay. Q Okay. Do you recognize it?	22	A Yeah.

	74	27	
	Page 262		Page 264
1	the buyer at Menards says, "Hey, you know, do you have	1	A No, I have nothing more to add.
2	this?" And so this is our response.	2	Q Okay. It could have been interesting. Anyway,
3	Q Okay.	3	at the top of this Meadow 65, this is personal archive,
4	A Yeah.	4	Thomas Coe.
5	Q And that was Menard's making face at the time	5	A Yes.
6	as the competitors had a chlorine rating of 5, whereas	6	Q What is that?
7	NIBCO's product was 3, right, so they could lose those	7	A That's the first I've ever seen it. I don't
8	accounts, right?	8	know. I don't know what that means.
9	A Yeah, yeah. Everyone thinks 5 is better than	9	Q Okay. Did you have a personal archive at
10	3. But they're really it's not a ranking. It's	10	NIBCO?
11	it's different standards for different products.	11	A No.
12	Q But a 5 is a more chlorine-resistant product,	12	Q No? You never had a document that with
13	right?	13	your name on it that showed that?
14	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.	14	A No. Uh-uh. No, I don't know what that's
15	A It depends, you know. It depends.	15	about. He may have established a folder to put to
16	Q It depends on what?	16	archive things.
17	A Well, it's like we talked about earlier. We	17	Q Okay. And if you can take a look at what
18	felt like, you know, the testing, there are some issues,	18	we've marked as Meadow 66, which is a document
19	you know with the testing and, you know, our product is	19	encompassing Bates numbers Meadows 62269 through 62271.
20	well above all the minimum standards there for, you	20	It's a document that says, "Lebanon Facility Standard
21	know, domestic plumbing systems, so it's it looks	21	Operating Procedures." And then it says, "Customer
22	like a good, better, best, but it's a little more	22	Complaint Investigation Form." Do you recognize this
23	it's more complicated than that.	23	document?
24	Q If you can take a look at what we've marked as	24	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 66 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)
25	Meadow 65. This is a one-page document. Bates number	25	A Yeah, I think I saw this.
	Page 263		Page 265
1	Meadows 125460. You're in an e-mail chain here, and it	1	Q And a customer complaint investigation form,
2	concerns the sure San Antonio subdivision dated July	2	is that part of the PER system?
3	12, 2013. Do you recognize this document and what it	3	A No, this is when tubing was coming to Lebanon
4	concerns?	4	for evaluation, this is this is what Debbie used to
5	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 65 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION	N) 5	document her findings.
6	A Yeah, this is yeah, I recognize this.	6	Q Okay. And was this a newer system that she
7	Q Okay. Do you remember getting it, the e-mail?	7	developed at sometime after she became part of NIBCO?
8	A Yeah, I do now.	8	A I don't know when this was developed, but I
9	Q Okay. And what does this concern?	9	I know that as long as I was with the business, she was
10	A This was Tom Coe had investigated some of the	10	using a form, you know, like this.
11	houses in San Antonio where Christianson had some leaks,	11	Q If you could take a look at what's been marked
12	PEX leaks. And so this was just his a quick e-mail	12	as Meadow 67, which encompasses Meadows Bates numbers
13	that he sent to me with his initial findings.	13	135088 through 135089. Take a look at this and tell me
14	Q Okay. And then he says in his e-mail to you,	14	if you've seen this before.
15	"I think we can keep this customer if we do this right."	15	(MEADOW EXHIBIT 67 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)
16	And that customer was Christianson, right?	16	A Do you know who the author of this is?
17	A Yes.	17	Q That was my next question. I would add that
18	Q Okay. And then what happened with	18	it has additional Bates stamp of MRK73.
19	Christianson?	19	A Okay.
20	A Well, they stopped buying it from us. I don't	20	Q Do you know what MRK is?
21	know exactly why. Maybe he didn't do a good enough job	21	A Yeah, it's it was our rep, Doug Reem, I
22	there.	22	believe was his name.
23	Q By the way	23	Q And it looks like you, at a prior deposition
24	A Even	24	in 2015, you were asked about this document?
25	Q Sorry. Go ahead.	25	A Yeah, yeah.

Page 266 Page 268 1 Q So you've seen this, at least in your produced. It probably was only sent to one -- I don't 1 2 deposition, last time? 2 know who we sent it to, but probably just the one. But 3 3 A Yeah, yeah. it was just something that we kept in our back pocket if 4 Q Had you seen it before your deposition? 4 -- if we needed it to address, you know, questions about 5 A I don't think so. I'm not sure. Unless he 5 the differences between our warranty and a competitor's б sent it to me. I don't think he ever did, yeah. 6 warranty. 7 7 Q Okay. So this is somebody's writing as to Q And would that have gone to any homeowners? 8 NIBCO's history with Christianson Plumbing and NIBCO. 8 A No. 9 Did you take issue with any of the factual 9 Okay. You were asked some questions about 10 10 locations in the United States that may have high water representations in this Meadow 67? 11 MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form. pressure, and one of the locations identified was the 11 12 12 Well, yeah, I take issue with a lot of it. Southeast of the United States. And my 13 Q What do you disagree with what the author of 13 question is: Are you saying that generally the Southeast 14 this document wrote about the dispute between 14 United States has high water pressure? 15 Christianson and NIBCO? 15 A I think I was saying is that when we saw a 16 MR. KUHLMAN: Same objection. high water pressure conditions, it was usually in the 16 17 A Well, our Doug Calvert converted the account 17 Southeast. It doesn't mean that it's across all the 18 and Doug Green did not. You know, with the meeting with 18 Southeast, but, you know, we've already talked about Pulte, you know, I just shared the information that we 19 19 Charlotte and San Antonio. It's not a broad statement 20 -- that we had. I wasn't trying to blame anything. I 20 per se, because, like Christianson, they bought tubing 21 was just trying to enlighten them, and -- so those are 21 from us, installed three times as much in Austin as in 22 the two main things. 22 San Antonio, same product, but there were no issues in 23 MR. DEUTSCH: Okay. Let's take a two-minute 23 Austin. So we -- we have had no -- found no evidence of break and see if we're done, or at least we're done 24 24 pressure issues in -- in other parts of the country, 25 25 like the Midwest, for example, where we probably sold on our side. Page 267 Page 269 1 1 (OFF THE RECORD) more PEX in the Midwest than anyplace else in the United 2 States. So just a few pockets in the Southeast is where 2 **CROSS EXAMINATION** 3 3 BY MR. KUHLMAN: these issues occurred. 4 4 Q Mr. Doering, my name is Kevin Kuhlman, and I Q You were asked some questions about fitting 5 represent NIBCO in this case, and I have just a couple 5 failures, and I'd like to talk to you first about the 6 Linx fitting failures that were discussed, and you were 6 of quick questions for you, and then we'll wrap it up. 7 7 It's around 7:15. I'd like to direct your attention to asked some questions about a shipment of fittings where 8 8 a document that was marked as Exhibit 6, and I'll just the supplier used the wrong alloy. Do you remember 9 9 answering some questions about that? hand you --10 10 A Yes. A Okay. 11 -- my copy here. Do you remember answering a 11 Okay. And with respect to those fittings, few questions about this document? 12 were the customers who complained about problems with 12 13 those fittings made whole, essentially? 13 A Yes. 14 And this document describes -- well, tell me, 14 A Yes. 15 what is this document again? 15 Q And to your knowledge, have all claims that A Their -- one of our competitors had changed 16 were submitted on those Linx claims that were -- that 16 had the wrong alloy issue, were those all -- have all 17 their product warranty to include things like, we cover 17 18 damage to carpeting, furniture, drywall, you know. And 18 those complaints been taken care of, to the best of your 19 so this letter was a response to -- to that warranty 19 knowledge? 20 20 A Well, when I left, there were still some claim that a competitor had made. 21 Q And was this letter intended for broad 21 claims outstanding, but I know that when I left, we were 22 distribution, or was this to address a specific issue 22 actively working, you know, to complete those claims. 23 Q Okay. With respect to other fittings sold by 23 that came up somewhere? A I think this came up with, like, one or two 24 NIBCO that were not part of that specific issue with the 24

25

25

customers, and so this is just a letter that we

wrong alloy, how would you describe the number of

		<u> </u>	-
	Page 270		Page 272
1	failures that NIBCO has seen in those fittings, the	1	Q But you didn't have any way to determine which
2	entire other universe of fittings?	2	ones were the good ones and the bad ones, right, in that
3	A Well, I'd say that very few. I'd say less	3	batch?
4	than I saw less than a handful that I was aware of of	4	MR. KUHLMAN: Object to form.
5	fitting failures.	5	A No. If fittings were returned, we just
6	MR. KUHLMAN: I don't have anything else. We'll	6	assumed they were bad, and then we took care of the
7	reserve the rest for trial.	7	claim
8	MR. DEUTSCH: Okay. I just want to ask one	8	Q Okay. But theoretically at least, some of the
9	follow-up question.	9	fittings that got sold out that have not appeared as
10	RE-EXAMINATION	10	claims yet could, in the future, result in failure that
11	BY MR. DEUTSCH:	11	results in a claim, no?
12	Q The Linx claims that you satisfied, did you	12	A Could, but I would say it's unlikely.
13	did NIBCO ever attempt to figure out what were the	13	Q Okay.
14	number of fittings sold as compared to the claims that	14	MR. DEUTSCH: No further questions.
15	came in to determine whether or not 100 percent of the	15	MR. KUHLMAN: Well, I have one more.
16	defective Linx fittings resulted in a payment to the	16	RECROSS EXAMINATION
17	user of the Linx fitting?	17	BY MR. KUHLMAN:
18	A We knew how many we had shipped, and we knew	18	Q With respect to Exhibit 6, the letter that we
19	how many we had gotten back, and we knew how many were	19	talked about just a moment ago.
20	still out there. Now, not all of in that number that	20	A Yes.
21	were shipped, not all of them failed, you know. Some	21	Q Was that an attempt by you to alter the
22	failed, some did not. And so and as we reported	22	warranty in some way, or was that more your attempt to
23	earlier, the failures tended to happen within a few	23	articulate that NIBCO was going to stand by its product?
24	months, which is probably a good thing. So there, I	24	A Yeah.
25	we don't know those exact numbers, but we do know that	25	Q And that NIBCO had a goodwill process in
	Page 271		Page 273
1	there's fittings that the entire batch that was shipped	1	place?
2	was not defective. But we, you know, attempted to get	2	A Yeah. I mean, I wrote that letter in
3	all those back from, you know, within that certain	3	conjunction with our legal people, and, you know, that
4	range.	4	letter was what we were trying to achieve is saying,
5	Q When you say they the whole batch was not	5	you know, our you know, you are covered under our
6	defective, how do you square that with saying that they	6	warranty, you know, you have a redress without us having
7	used the wrong ally alloy or the fitting?	7	to spell out every single thing in the house that might
8	A Well, you know, again, I'm not the technical	8	get damaged.
9	expert on this. The alloy itself wasn't the problem,	9	Q And NIBCO had a goodwill policy as well?
10	but it's the processing of the alloy. So it would be	10	A Oh, yes, of course.
11	like if you changed a cake recipe, and you didn't adjust	11	Q Okay.
12	the oven temperature or something like that. So the	12	MR. KUHLMAN: Okay. I'm good. I think that's
13	I'm only guessing here, but I'm surmising that there	13	it for now.
14	probably was some variability window there where, you	14	(DEPOSITION CONCLUDED AT 7:25 P.M.)
15	know, the processing, you know, was correct with that,	15	
16	or and there was some that, you know, clearly weren't	16	
17	formed properly, but some were.	17	
18	Q And you're talking about the batch that you	18	
19	received that you were concerned about?	19	
20	A Yes.	20	
21	Q That you defined as ones that you would accept	21	
22	those claims on?	22	
23	A Yes.	23	
24	Q Is that right?	24	
25	A Yes.	25	

## Case 3:13-cv-07871-FLW-TJB Document 131-10 Filed 07/28/17 Page 71 of 113 PageID: 7430

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	Page 274	
1	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER	
2	COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY AT LARGE	
3	COMMON WEALTH OF KENTUCKT AT LAKEE	
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4	I do hereby certify that the witness in the foregoing	
5	transcript was taken on the date, and at the time and	
6	place set out on the Title page hereof by me after first	
7	being duly sworn to testify the truth, the whole truth,	
8	and nothing but the truth; and that the said matter was	
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10	under my direction, and constitutes a true record of the	
11	transcript as taken, all to the best of my skills and	
12	ability. I certify that I am not a relative or employee	
13	of either counsel, and that I am in no way interested	
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A
<b>ability</b> 60:24 61:9
68:11 116:23
159:23 274:12
<b>able</b> 38:20 57:6
89:15 98:12
103:12 106:14
113:12,13,24
119:16 143:22,22
158:3 204:22
206:19 207:10
234:17 236:4
254:13 255:4
absolutely 127:19
abstract 247:19
accept 69:6,11
107:6,8 271:21
acceptable 64:5
accepted 105:15,17
258:10
access 206:18
accessories 18:9
account 219:8,14
219:18 225:14
266:17
accountability
258:16
accounting 39:13
169:15 182:1,10
accounts 191:2
211:4 224:1 262:
accuracy 53:19
accurate 26:1
48:15 60:12
108:23,25 117:4
155:12 167:19
171:12,16
ace 191:22,22
achieve 126:23
132:6,15 198:14
241:19 273:4
achievement 89:2
achieving 89:1,13
acidic 141:9
acquire 21:14

190:5
acquired 36:20
37:16 73:4,6
74:20 85:23
121:17 144:10
146:4 163:17
189:23 190:1
226:23 257:22
258:17
acquiring 18:3
36:24
acquisition 28:21
28:25 29:1,8 33:2
33:8 37:20 38:6
38:13 39:5,11,19
39:22 40:15,21
41:3,9,17,21 42:6
42:14 162:12,16
165:16 180:8
189:24 197:5
258:1,2,25
action 1:2 125:19
184:6 200:19
256:16 274:14
actions 174:22
194:20 247:24
256:15
actively 269:22
activities 37:12
actual 112:3 253:15
253:17
<b>ad</b> 16:3 <b>add</b> 77:24 134:14
140:5 152:24
140:5 152:24 194:19 253:1
264:1 265:17
added 27:20,21
78:2 197:5
adding 48:19 49:20
78:25 117:11
addition 134:2
additional 60:20
68:9,24 69:1,2
77:24 78:2,18
17.24 70.2,10

123:13 237:9 239:8 265:18

189:3 200:13
240:24 241:3,6
,
253:22,25
aggressiveness
141:1 142:21
143:5,13 149:11
ago 8:22 135:15
177.15 100.17
177:15 192:17
230:7 233:14,24
272:19
agree 237:16,23
0
253:20 254:24
255:3
<b>agreed</b> 6:8 219:7
ahead 43:16 63:21
157:3 217:16
222:14 263:25
abald 102.2 216.10
<b>ahold</b> 193:2 216:19
216:20
air 243:6,7,7,11
<b>alabama</b> 159:13
160:2 208:10
210:21 212:1,5,9
212:12,22 225:21
233:10
alan 1:3 2:3
alicia 79:24 80:2,8
alignment 20:20
allay 152:18,18
allegation 8:19
227:5
allegations 8:16 9:8
<b>alleging</b> 9:10,14
<b>allow</b> 100:6 111:21
116:6 151:14,24
154:12 198:15
13 1.12 170.13
220 0
230:8
allowed 100:8
<b>allowed</b> 100:8 139:13
<b>allowed</b> 100:8 139:13 <b>allowing</b> 111:13
<b>allowed</b> 100:8 139:13 <b>allowing</b> 111:13
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11
<b>allowed</b> 100:8 139:13 <b>allowing</b> 111:13
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11 150:22 151:5
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11 150:22 151:5 alloy 180:18 199:2
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11 150:22 151:5 alloy 180:18 199:2
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11 150:22 151:5 alloy 180:18 199:2 199:15,17 208:9
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11 150:22 151:5 alloy 180:18 199:2 199:15,17 208:9 214:2,13,16 215:3
allowed 100:8 139:13 allowing 111:13 allows 147:10,11 150:22 151:5 alloy 180:18 199:2 199:15,17 208:9

Page 1
218:18 221:12 222:10 269:8,17 269:25 271:7,9,10 allplastic 206:13 ally 271:7 alter 272:21 ameliorate 247:25 america 242:24
amount 44:22 56:4 193:4 218:3 220:16 225:25 237:13 amounts 218:2 analysis 129:18
analysts 129:16,25 analyzes 138:17 analyzing 122:14 ancillary 18:7 177:2 179:13
angeles 201:17,24 202:5,9,11,19 206:6,16,22 207:9 anniston 208:10,18 209:25,25 211:8
annual 196:24 219:23 answer 10:18,25 11:4,8,13 55:16 61:4 66:9 116:16 179:12 254:17 257:20
answered 167:4 244:20 answering 267:11 269:9 answers 10:17
108:22 126:7 anticipated 182:2 antonio 146:10,13 146:14 158:18 248:22 263:2,11 268:19,22
anybody 233:7 245:7 anymore 94:11 172:10 247:8



anyplace 269:1	206:22 20
anyway 90:13	217:25
264:2	approve 20
ap 223:24,24	218:1
apart 177:11	approved 6
201:19	137:25 15
apologize 162:16	175:17 18
apparent 103:11	202:13 21
apparently 217:7	approving
239:21 248:23	approxima
<b>appeal</b> 46:19	219:24
appear 227:9	approxima
appearance 170:7	247:2
appearances 2:1	archive 264
3:1	area 12:4 2
appeared 118:14	52:3 56:6
272:9	100:8 122
appears 65:8 165:2	141:13 14
167:11 171:11	146:10,10
189:6 207:18	149:6,10
224:14 252:24	159:12,14
applicable 33:18	160:9 161
35:8 57:6 103:13	162:4 208
103:25 188:7	211:15,16
207:4	213:19 21
application 100:22	225:17 23
143:13 161:20	233:3 237
200:10 253:17	241:8,9 2
applications 28:23	areas 141:1
29:14 32:15 98:2	142:6 158
196:13 250:8	158:23 15
applied 185:15	159:22 16
<b>apply</b> 243:4	162:3 212
appreciable 115:6	232:2,5,6
appreciate 145:12	232:22,25
154:21	<b>arent</b> 25:20
apprise 118:5	54:14 242
approach 68:22	arguably 1
approaches 132:15	arguing 90
appropriate 134:5	arizona 203
134:25 135:5	<b>arose</b> 166:4
140:1 194:9	arrange 95
approval 156:22	<b>arrow</b> 65:5
198:10 199:5,8	article 252:
201:9 202:6,17,19 205:25 206:6,15	articulate 2 arts 12:7

206:22 207:9 217:25 approve 203:2 218:1 approved 63:22 137:25 154:16 175:17 182:21 202:13 217:20 approving 257:5 approximately 6:6 219:24 approximation 247:2 archive 264:3,9,16 area 12:4 20:22 52:3 56:6 62:22 100:8 122:8 141:13 144:8,14 146:10,10,13 149:6,10 158:18 159:12,14,16 160:9 161:10 162:4 208:14 211:15,16 212:5 213:19 216:20 225:17 232:14 233:3 237:15 241:8,9 249:9 areas 141:10,16 142:6 158:17,22 158:23 159:8,16 159:22 161:13,17 162:3 212:10 232:2,5,6,15,19 232:22,25 arent 25:20 26:21 54:14 242:18 arguably 194:7 arguing 90:14 arizona 203:21
arose 166:4
arrange 95:25
arrow 65:5
article 252:14,15
articulate 272:23
arts 12:7
WI W 12.1

ashley 24:17
<b>asian</b> 176:19
180:13 183:24
aside 40:5 46:7
58:16 78:23 84:3
98:24 113:23
173:22
asked 24:7 115:1
162:15 167:2
214:2 217:7 252:5
252:12 265:24
268:9 269:4,7
asking 7:18 36:1
66:7,10 88:14
93:15 108:7
186:19 193:19
206:7 223:9 237:9
251:1 251:1
aspect 20:14 82:9
211:21
<b>aspects</b> 51:9 241:22
260:7
aspired 28:12
assessing 236:13
assessment 117:4
assets 21:15 28:22
29:2,9 37:20
39:11 40:21 73:4
74:21 121:17
144:11 146:4
162:21 163:18
165:16 189:23
190:1 257:18,18
257:23 258:1,17
258:25
<b>assigned</b> 19:14 94:4
160:20 172:6
<b>assignment</b> 171:23
assistant 171:25,25
associate 157:21
160:19 163:1
associated 74:12
associates 237:15
associations 79:13
90:6
assume 11:8

**assumed** 117:21 190:16 272:6 assuming 250:24 assurances 184:10 asterisk 64:15 astm 57:6 62:21,23 104:7 138:9 **atlanta** 149:8,18 210:17 **attached** 207:17 235:13 attachment 252:9 252:19,19 attack 205:2 215:5 attacked 116:6 attacking 213:17 **attempt** 68:23 153:2 270:13 272:21,22 attempted 271:2 attend 83:16 84:5 attendance 83:11 84:3 attended 83:10,23 attending 36:9 attention 267:7 attorney 154:15 217:24 atypical 237:15 238:10 audience 150:10 audit 184:1 241:21 241:25 242:15 audited 242:9 **auditors** 80:10 81:3 **august** 164:20 165:8 austin 268:21,23 **author** 130:21 265:16 266:13 authored 125:2 authority 217:20 **available** 34:18,23 34:25 73:11 87:6 87:10 99:2

**avenues** 117:13

average 111:9 204:16 219:16 234:2 253:3,3 aware 35:13.21 36:3,6,16 41:11 43:12 58:25 76:16 80:8,13,19,21,23 81:1,14 91:13,16 91:16 92:20 119:3 141:17 144:2,3,4 159:9 161:3,4,8,9 161:12,17,19 165:24 180:25 186:22 187:1 188:13 193:8 194:18,22,25 205:13 212:5 247:22 270:4 **awhile** 44:20 **axis** 74:14,17 75:10 B **b** 126:22 207:14 bachelor 12:7 **bachelors** 12:1,2,10 12:12 back 12:13 13:5,21 25:24 48:20 49:21 50:22 63:5 74:4 74:23 86:12 95:3 97:14 109:6 125:2 129:11 131:20 133:12,13 139:16 169:4,6 180:23 182:19 186:6,11 189:10 193:3,4,6 197:25 208:20 209:14 221:16,25 224:23 229:25 268:3 270:19 271:3 backgrounds 72:4 backtrack 44:11 **backup** 78:15 **bad** 67:10 104:22 105:1 160:4,5



162:5 214:21	219:5	158:6 166:5 167:1	74:10 76:2 78:17	<b>brief</b> 168:23
272:2,6	beg 167:4	216:24 262:22	78:24 81:2,5,23	briefly 24:22 44:17
badgero 220:4	began 15:22,25	269:18 274:11	84:5 88:13 90:20	brigham 216:13
221:13	25:25 29:18 31:7	better 31:16 46:7	91:11 125:2,20	244:25
bag 143:19	31:8 86:20 186:23	46:13,16,20,22,23	175:9 259:25	bring 20:21 21:18
ballpark 38:17	<b>beginning</b> 13:16	47:8,18 67:12	<b>bobos</b> 50:22 125:11	84:17
39:22	20:8 29:11 95:12	75:19 88:15 98:11	<b>boiling</b> 56:9	brings 120:8
<b>banning</b> 206:11	258:25 261:11	98:12,15 109:7,25	<b>bold</b> 154:2 250:19	<b>broad</b> 240:8,10
barbara 1:14	begins 60:15 64:3	111:11 113:19	bona 247:13	267:21 268:19
barbs 177:7	68:3	114:7,21 115:3	bonds 72:20	broadcast 240:2,15
barrier 28:24	<b>behalf</b> 1:4,16 2:3,6	121:3 125:24	borgerding 172:25	<b>brought</b> 8:24 81:5
based 17:17 27:2,2	2:15,17 3:3	145:18 149:22	173:9	90:12 211:25
49:24 51:22 54:16	166:25 227:22	202:12 230:3	<b>born</b> 7:23	buck 22:2
55:14 62:3 65:13	behooves 70:19	234:16 256:12	boss 125:11	<b>bucket</b> 209:8
67:8 71:12 78:2	<b>believe</b> 8:15 9:1,2	262:9,22	<b>boston</b> 211:15	<b>build</b> 255:5
116:24 139:7	9:12,21,23,24	<b>beyond</b> 70:16 101:7	<b>bottom</b> 63:25 65:4	builders 144:12
143:21 155:5,6	10:9 18:13,20	204:18 228:20	66:11 154:1 171:9	193:17 194:13
231:7,16 234:5	22:25 28:15 29:25	<b>big</b> 38:4 54:25,25	172:11 198:19	building 73:6
255:5	35:9,17 41:13	57:23 61:16	217:12 223:23	226:23,24
basically 31:16	43:6 45:8,19,19	173:17 192:7	224:2 233:12,18	buildings 179:19
36:9 41:14 49:9	46:5 47:3 49:24	202:2 209:7,8	235:15 242:22	<b>built</b> 144:5 202:10
94:25 119:20	54:3 58:3 60:1	211:4,16 226:4	<b>bought</b> 41:7 177:2	<b>bulk</b> 198:10
126:12 153:1	62:8 65:14 66:22	<b>bigger</b> 152:21	214:10 268:20	<b>bullet</b> 75:24,24
154:18 165:12,21	73:19 86:16 87:24	179:3	boulevard 3:6	88:25
183:22 202:4	88:3 112:25	biggest 225:24	boxes 226:18	<b>bulletin</b> 162:3
208:14 209:8	123:21 134:24	<b>bill</b> 169:6 208:15	<b>boyd</b> 1:3 2:4	<b>bunch</b> 69:9
257:14	150:4 155:10	<b>birth</b> 7:22	<b>brag</b> 242:19	<b>burst</b> 33:24 148:22
<b>basis</b> 17:11 53:19	172:18 176:19	<b>bit</b> 18:22 21:6 32:1	<b>branch</b> 208:10	204:24 205:5
96:17 126:11	197:5 203:20	42:21 52:9 59:16	209:10 210:1,1	business 11:18
158:14 174:9	245:17 265:22	67:1,2 70:22 75:1	<b>brand</b> 26:3 31:9	17:16,20 19:15
234:21 260:12	believed 17:19	91:19 108:8 109:7	41:23	20:21 21:19,22
<b>batch</b> 271:1,5,18	139:25	114:7 127:20	branding 40:22	24:12 46:4 82:25
272:3	belong 90:6	129:17,18 158:2	42:3	83:4 84:1 85:10
bates 171:7 197:10	ben 185:25	242:20	<b>brass</b> 180:5,7	85:24 86:3,5,6,12
205:23 207:15,17	bend 32:4,13 101:9	black 217:9	186:24 187:5,7,14	109:2 117:10
213:1 216:12	101:14 129:3	<b>blame</b> 266:20	187:14,15,21,22	121:1 144:18,19
218:9 221:2 222:2	179:22 228:11,15	blank 251:19	188:1,4,16 199:1	168:20 170:23
222:20 224:21	228:20	blasting 159:22	199:6,8 202:22,23	171:3 173:24
229:7 233:18	<b>bending</b> 101:6,8	blessing 175:8	202:25 206:11	174:1,4,7,11,13
236:25 239:17	111:13	blowing 243:7	213:13 215:24	174:20 176:2,4
244:1 249:20	benefits 178:11	<b>blue</b> 49:13	235:6,9 241:2,4	183:6 187:1,7
256:25 260:25	bent 100:2,2 101:7	<b>bm</b> 2:24	break 11:11,14	190:2,21 191:3,16
262:25 264:19	berger 2:19	<b>bobo</b> 4:13 48:3,6,7	88:19 123:14	191:22 196:10,16
265:12,18	best 101:23 102:1	49:11 51:7,14	157:10 266:24	196:22,25 197:6
beam 28:1 75:2	122:5 126:13	52:2 60:11,16	breaking 12:8	219:20,21,24
becoming 134:2	133:20 157:18	61:8 68:7,21 70:1	<b>brian</b> 224:3,3	241:23 265:9



Page	4
------	---

businesses 170:24	176:20 206:20	244:2 259:14	58:6 60:17 61:9	255:24 259:15
170:25	208:4 220:9,16	267:5	61:19 70:18,19	261:1,10,11 263:1
<b>busy</b> 40:19	225:12 226:2,3	casebycase 96:17	78:22 84:8 88:3	challenges 174:18
<b>buy</b> 30:11 210:17	246:17	cases 67:5 98:8	128:12 164:15	174:19
257:19	capable 54:5	99:25 100:4,25	185:15 195:1	<b>chamber</b> 133:5,5,7
buyer 261:12 262:1	<b>capacity</b> 37:4 119:4	101:18,21 102:21	217:19,22 231:17	chance 59:20
buyers 223:11	capital 32:6	103:4 115:16	271:3	<b>change</b> 19:2,18
<b>buying</b> 18:5,13	capitalized 154:2	117:22 121:14	certainly 30:1	21:12 23:25 38:25
30:17 88:7 176:23	capitals 250:20	142:15 189:19,20	61:10 67:20	41:8 55:16 61:4
225:5,9,10 263:20	car 148:24	247:10	110:23 122:3	61:12 68:8,10
<b>buysell</b> 210:17	care 51:8 84:24	catastrophic 101:3	128:16 133:24	86:4 87:13,18
	142:3 156:19,20	148:19	154:21 155:3	97:9 114:1 121:10
C	157:3 160:25	catch 219:10	156:3 230:20	122:12,24 140:22
c 2:19 126:22	165:18 183:12	category 174:20	certificate 274:1	178:19 187:17,18
cake 271:11	184:8 208:17	cause 95:7,14	certification 52:23	188:20 189:22
california 168:13	210:2,7 211:2	100:16 101:11	55:14,22 56:5	229:3 246:20
187:16,16,18	269:18 272:6	102:3,18 103:10	57:15 58:7,8,13	247:4
201:17,19,20	careful 141:24	103:23 104:1	58:20,22 60:24	changed 40:21
202:14,16 206:10	carolina 144:1	105:9,21 106:14	62:10 70:24 71:22	85:15 145:13
call 82:25 106:2	145:17 146:2	106:16,24 107:3	76:12 77:2,16	146:5 248:2
147:17 163:20	158:18 159:13,15	108:9 114:9	84:8 85:2 91:21	267:16 271:11
189:23	210:20	115:22 118:18	91:23 105:2	changes 145:14
called 15:20 18:21	carpet 152:13	120:1 128:3,6,12	138:24 238:6	146:6,7
27:15,25 28:24	carpeting 152:6	148:11 185:2	241:15	channels 87:7
67:3 72:24 94:16	267:18	233:8,15,25	certifications 34:14	characteristics
119:20 168:22	carrier 165:18	243:19 248:9	56:14 64:1 89:15	100:24
176:19,24,24	182:5,15,24	caused 99:22 101:3	<b>certified</b> 53:14 54:7	characterize
178:9 179:13	216:23 217:18	106:25 117:20	55:3,6 57:2,5,17	238:12
187:10 196:9	258:8	128:23 129:6	138:14 242:5	characterizing
197:23 211:13	case 1:14 8:14,16	143:23 148:12	certifier 48:21	256:17
<b>calls</b> 162:2	8:20,23,24 9:8,10	151:5,12 210:6	77:20	<b>charge</b> 21:1 173:1
<b>calvert</b> 266:17	10:4 25:5 27:20	causes 27:17,24	certify 49:25 58:3	212:14 241:2
canada 27:7	78:18 94:8,9 95:1	99:24 109:10	274:4,12	<b>charlotte</b> 159:14,15
canadian 28:8	102:20 111:17	113:20 117:5,15	chad 1:15 2:15	161:10,14 162:7
57:13 124:2	116:21 120:22	118:12 247:23	<b>chain</b> 5:9,11,12,14	232:14,19,22
candidate 24:11	148:18 166:8,24	causing 215:5	5:15 107:17	233:3 268:19
191:5	194:19,19,20,22	234:22	164:14 199:20	<b>chart</b> 4:24,25 64:11
cant 27:7 28:8	194:23 195:10,13	cautions 161:24	203:9,10 204:6	64:11 118:9
34:11,11 41:25	195:15 204:3	cc 197:10	205:21 213:2,8	167:11 171:9
45:11 66:9 78:7,7	211:7 213:18	ccd 164:20	218:10,24 220:25	172:11 173:13
79:7 94:5,5 101:4	214:18 217:3	ccing 107:21	221:1,3,10 222:3	chase 166:11
102:4 106:11	218:6 221:13	cemented 226:14	229:8,15 230:1	<b>cheap</b> 178:3 236:10
114:8 117:17	227:10,14,19	central 160:24	236:24 237:4	check 75:5 103:1
124:15 125:18	228:25 235:1,10	225:18	238:20,22 244:3	111:20 117:7
127:3 145:7	236:23 237:18	ceo 169:24 219:7	244:11 249:19	143:19 153:10
159:18 160:1	239:9,11 241:3	certain 39:12 56:4	251:12,14,23	219:9 223:24



224 4 220 22	0.25.0.0.105.12	1	106.20	
224:4 230:22	8:25 9:8 195:13	clarification 123:15	196:20	communication
235:2 249:17	225:4,24 227:1	<b>clarify</b> 11:7 23:23	combat 152:19	48:25
checking 111:17	228:1 263:11,16	137:21	combination 101:1	communications
chemical 27:17,20	263:19 266:8,15	clark 90:18 91:10	255:15	35:1,2 108:16
27:24 115:18	268:20	197:10 205:22	come 23:17 51:14	communities 160:1
235:24	<b>chubb</b> 182:25	class 166:25 194:20	72:8 74:23 76:25	companies 21:14
chemist 122:4	cincinnati 20:22	cleaner 10:21	82:2 96:10 177:11	21:15,16 26:18
chicago 2:11	circulate 135:6	clear 10:22 11:2	183:3 188:11	27:2,3,5 54:21
<b>chief</b> 18:21 168:7	circulated 125:6,10	188:15	202:22 225:7	57:10 134:10
173:19 177:3	circulating 44:23	<b>clearly</b> 271:16	229:25 234:20	196:14 242:4,17
<b>china</b> 178:3 183:25	circumference	clerical 172:4	236:5,15	246:1
chlorinated 137:25	74:15,18 75:11	<b>client</b> 176:22 223:1	comes 54:24 90:7	<b>company</b> 12:15,18
146:25 147:2	circumstances	close 109:22 123:5	102:23 192:15	15:6,19,20 18:20
161:25	105:13 107:9	142:10 180:3	195:7 241:21	20:22 27:6,7 28:8
chlorine 34:5,9	116:21 218:7	206:10 207:9	243:11	30:17 39:2 52:15
35:13,22 36:4,7	cite 235:17	closely 57:22 126:5	comfortable 127:16	72:24 73:5 129:24
47:7,15 60:19	<b>cities</b> 159:18	<b>closer</b> 20:23 98:11	coming 44:10 45:25	168:4 173:7
61:21 62:20 64:12	<b>city</b> 3:7 201:9 206:6	clues 115:2	59:12 111:17	176:18,24 183:11
64:25 69:21 72:9	civil 1:2 6:7	<b>clyde</b> 169:5	117:11 131:20	190:4 195:23
84:16 89:1,20	<b>claim</b> 67:20 114:13	<b>code</b> 146:17 147:6	146:16 225:6	196:8 210:9
92:13 104:15	154:5 217:5	147:10,11,12,14	265:3	211:13 217:11,13
111:21,25 115:19	218:21 219:10	147:18,20,25,25	comment 114:8	259:2
136:25 137:13	221:15 222:15	148:6 149:9	142:20 218:15	companys 245:12
142:1,12,15,17	223:8,21 224:12	201:18	commenting 251:4	compare 30:23
188:23 189:1,2,8	227:7 239:13	codes 90:19 147:16	commercial 70:21	87:11
189:12,16,19,19	257:12 267:20	192:25 206:7	commission 108:2	compared 58:8
251:15 253:1,4,6	272:7,11	coe 5:3 22:23 84:6	250:16 261:15	60:21 73:10
253:7,15,16,21	<b>claims</b> 119:5	113:4 122:8	274:24	270:14
254:5 255:25	165:17,25 182:6,7	157:15 163:2	<b>commit</b> 187:9	compensation 96:1
261:21 262:6	182:20,24 183:1,3	250:3 251:13	committee 168:22	competed 192:2
chlorineresistance	183:11 208:16	255:25 261:1	168:22 169:2,18	competent 121:23
36:17 47:2,9	209:9 216:18,25	263:10 264:4	170:6,10 173:23	competitive 17:15
53:22 54:9 55:5	217:16 220:7,11	coil 172:21	174:2	31:15,20 89:1,10
59:10 61:9 66:13	223:11 224:10	cole 1:3,3 2:3,3	committees 90:8,10	92:11,14 133:20
89:14 93:15	258:8,11 259:3,6	4:12 7:16 194:20	<b>common</b> 111:12	134:3
chlorineresistant	259:7 269:15,16	194:22,25	224:16 247:14	competitor 152:4
47:14 66:24 90:1	269:21,22 270:12	collaborative 130:4	commonly 187:8	152:19 267:20
262:12	270:14 271:22	130:11	commonwealth	competitors 31:17
<b>chose</b> 155:20	272:10	colleague 167:2	274:2	31:22 32:8 86:1
chosen 28:14	clamp 177:25	<b>color</b> 64:6	communicate	93:19 134:4
106:15	178:21 179:2	colored 65:3	106:15 155:20	141:14 154:20
<b>chris</b> 21:4,5,7,9,11	236:20	colors 60:18,20	192:19	174:22 187:2
21:13 42:16 169:7	clamping 178:9	64:17 139:14	communicated	256:15 261:19
189:25 190:1	clamps 176:5,9,16	columbus 173:6	95:20 258:22	262:6 267:16
218:23 219:2,6	177:17 178:4,14	column 65:3	communicates	268:5
christianson 5:18	183:15 236:16	com 2:13 3:10	105:18	complained 185:1
	100.10 200.10	3.10	100.10	100.1



260.12		101.11 12		200400000000000000000000000000000000000
269:12	concerned 63:8	181:11,12	contacted 32:20,22	controversy 52:13
complaining	77:3,12,21 142:2	configurations	193:9 195:22	61:25 66:23 67:17
244:17	271:19	181:9 214:23	219:7 246:19	89:21,24
<b>complaint</b> 10:3	<b>concerning</b> 201:9	confirm 49:12	contacting 163:13	conversion 87:13
95:21 119:17	221:2 244:5 246:1	234:25 239:9	193:16	<b>convert</b> 30:15
232:3 244:16	246:12 251:15	confirmation 207:3	contain 90:25	174:24
264:22 265:1	concerns 49:24	confirmed 138:25	118:8 140:4	converted 266:17
complaints 94:13	52:3,7,16,21	confirms 138:7	content 126:25	converting 187:13
98:15 119:2,5	61:23 69:24 73:21	conformance 88:15	127:18 141:9	coordination 40:22
212:6,20 245:8	74:2 84:15 90:4	conformed 49:14	188:2	<b>copied</b> 237:11
247:11,13 269:18	90:12 200:1	confusion 137:19	contention 227:22	244:8
complete 269:22	201:11 203:14	conjunction 273:3	context 152:4,17	<b>copper</b> 17:22 98:1
completed 14:4,5	206:2 207:20	connected 179:24	235:9 236:6	100:5 176:21
49:13 190:10	213:6 216:15	connection 176:20	240:25	177:12 178:8,25
completely 62:6	218:12,13 222:4,8	177:4,8,14 178:12	contingency 132:10	201:21 202:3,7
200:18 228:20	237:2 238:18,23	connections 18:9	continue 12:17	<b>coppers</b> 201:23
compliance 76:5,8	249:24 251:18	177:6	39:6 41:5 73:15	<b>copy</b> 229:16 250:10
242:12	255:25 256:3	consequential	86:21 92:25	267:11
compliant 241:12	259:20 261:3	154:4	133:11 162:17	core 83:18
242:18,19	263:2,4	conservation 92:23	continued 3:1 5:1	<b>corner</b> 171:9
complicated 56:14	concluded 231:15	consider 43:8	29:8 39:17 41:3	222:21
262:23	273:14	103:16,18 104:8	41:22 42:7 50:24	<b>corners</b> 179:23
component 238:2	conclusion 44:1	256:16	60:23 73:7 88:2	corporate 39:6
<b>comport</b> 153:17	128:8 157:8 246:5	consideration	190:12	162:24 163:9
154:11	conclusions 17:17	194:12 236:15	continuous 134:6	corporation 12:19
compounded 27:22	concurrently 124:5	considered 53:11	136:7 139:18,22	12:21 14:22
comprehensive	<b>condition</b> 129:6,6,7	68:14	140:2	<b>correct</b> 9:4 16:7,9
158:23	168:19 243:23	considering 36:24	contract 100:9	19:10 21:23 22:16
compromised	conditions 116:19	131:19 223:10	203:21	35:18 41:4,15,19
116:5	141:18 143:7	consistent 169:17	contraction 100:7	43:23 44:15,16
compston 37:14	144:2,4 200:13,17	259:2	111:14	48:21 56:21 58:1
computer 186:16	213:16 247:18	consistently 230:11	contractor 110:24	58:8 63:17 64:21
concentration	248:17 268:16	consolidated 18:5	208:19	65:24 66:3 71:9
111:21 212:1,6	conduct 26:24	18:14 27:8 257:14	contractors 93:6	89:12 91:12
251:15 253:4	33:12 34:4 92:16	constantly 140:17	150:11 151:11	109:18 112:13,24
concentrations	93:7 236:3	constitutes 274:10	193:11,12 209:4	119:7,10 120:4,11
253:10	conducted 37:5	consult 157:2	contracts 100:6	120:21 122:22
concern 47:1 61:16	63:11 93:21	consultation	contradict 165:20	123:4 138:11
61:21 66:17 69:13	106:19 123:2	155:20	contribute 103:5	139:8 150:7
69:20 70:2 78:2	215:2 237:10	consumer 254:7	contributed 101:24	153:23 156:9,11
174:11 200:6	conducts 241:21	consumers 44:4	contributing 75:20	160:17 164:16
202:22 203:19	conferred 225:15	146:16	control 12:25 13:2	169:10 170:16
206:4 225:3	confidence 62:17	contact 33:10 82:3	13:5,15 83:20	171:17 176:6,11
247:22,23 250:2	confident 126:8,10	94:22 119:12	108:21 178:5	182:13,14,18,22
252:6 256:9 257:1	126:10 185:13	120:7 163:12	242:8	188:4 204:16
261:9 263:9	configuration	193:10 244:6	controlled 126:5	217:14 227:21,25
201.9 203.9	Comigui auvii	173.10 444.0	Controlled 120.3	211.14 221.21,23



020 15 040 1 10	0.67.17		222 11 226 2	CO 11 00 22 25
239:15 243:1,12	267:17	criteria 60:18	222:11 226:3	69:11 89:22,25
243:16 271:15	covered 95:24	61:20 128:7,21,25	228:2 232:13	111:5 138:17
corrective 184:6	182:24 273:5	crittenden 6:4	250:25 261:24	231:8
correctly 98:3	covering 150:25	cross 4:5 27:24	263:15,16 264:21	date 1:24 7:22 43:3
correlates 205:8	covers 151:17	133:7 237:13	265:1	59:25 65:5 73:16
correspond 234:3	<b>cpi</b> 26:1,10 27:10	267:2	customers 19:14	139:24 192:25
corrode 241:4	29:1,2 31:8 32:19	crossfunctional	30:8,10 37:19,24	244:4 274:5
corroded 200:15	32:25 33:5,12,22	83:1	38:9,14,20 39:4	dated 131:4 136:25
corrosion 200:9	34:13 35:3,12	crosslink 73:18	44:10 45:25 46:5	197:11 199:21
215:14	36:20,24 37:13,16	236:11	46:7 57:16 87:16	203:11 205:22
<b>corrosive</b> 200:19	38:1,9,14,21 39:5	crosslinked 116:15	88:3,6,14 93:3,14	216:13 218:11
215:15	39:12,14,19,21	236:1	93:22 97:7 109:10	229:10 239:19
cost 17:23 31:14,19	40:10,15,24 41:6	crosslinking 27:18	117:1,7 119:5	251:14 261:2
69:8 88:9	41:9,23 60:17	28:2,6,9 72:15,22	120:12 135:22	263:2
costs 144:13 182:2	63:25 64:6,10,21	73:22 102:24	137:15,15,22	dates 187:12
182:12,16 183:3	74:21 77:8 99:4	103:1 105:7,10	144:17 151:11	daughter 24:19
185:3 234:15	121:17 144:10,22	117:19 126:16,21	154:11 155:20	dave 169:7
couldnt 178:5	144:24 145:2,20	126:23 230:6,23	161:18 162:1	david 4:13 48:3,6,7
counsel 274:13	146:4 157:21,22	237:21	174:23,24 177:14	50:6,22 51:7 52:2
counseled 155:15	161:11 162:10,12	crystal 1:25 6:8	180:22 181:25	60:11 61:8 69:16
count 181:7	162:16,17,21,21	10:22 274:22	188:16 193:2	78:6,17 81:2,23
country 57:18	163:1,12,15,18	csa 70:15 77:9 92:4	196:13 208:19	82:1 84:5 85:4
141:10,16 144:15	165:1,6,9,12,16	124:2	210:19 211:3	90:20 91:11 125:2
187:17 201:19	165:25 166:4,9	<b>culture</b> 190:4	214:14 219:6,14	125:11,15,17
225:17 247:18	180:6 189:23	current 64:7 68:22	231:16 240:3,8,14	175:9 211:13,14
248:15 268:24	190:1 197:5 233:2	74:8 76:5,8 78:3	242:7 248:25	259:25 260:6
county 201:17,24	233:15 234:1,6	171:23	256:11 267:25	davids 72:13
202:5,10,11,19	258:1,3,3,17	currently 64:8	269:12	day 6:5 42:2 108:11
couple 23:7 40:20	259:4,6,7	curve 67:8	cut 12:9 83:15	136:19 148:23,23
45:16 50:21 86:11	cpiinstalled 258:16	<b>custom</b> 15:6	112:10 144:12	148:24,25
91:18 150:1 170:3	<b>cpis</b> 34:5 35:7,13	<b>customer</b> 30:16	172:21	days 111:6 150:1
180:8 197:3 217:2	35:22 36:3,16	37:11 38:7 39:13		260:2
230:6 267:5	37:19 41:20 42:13		d 1:13,14	daytoday 19:11
course 90:20	165:17 258:17	94:13 95:20,23	dakotas 225:20	158:14 174:1,9
111:10 119:8	crack 235:7	96:21 100:19	damage 151:12,25	dayton 208:4
175:8 219:3	<b>cracking</b> 180:19	101:12 102:19	154:7,14 155:10	der 187:10,14,23
273:10	create 184:14	105:18,20,21	154.7,14 155.10	deacon 244:16,24
court 1:1,12 6:9 7:3	created 74:16	106:16,22,25	267:18	deal 39:2 186:1,23
7:6 186:8,11,15	137:11 261:20	107:18 108:8,15	damaged 273:8	dealing 108:15
186:20 205:17	creating 92:11	113:13,25 114:11	damages 151:5,14	151:1 237:15
216:5 221:25	cregger 222:11	114:16 119:1,12	153:3 154:4,7,13	deals 44:25
222:16 274:23	crenshaw 1:13	119:15 136:5	157:7 182:7	dealt 56:17 180:5
cover 126:16	crimp 177:10,13	140:5 155:25	dane 220:4 221:13	dean 7:23
150:20 152:10,12	178:25	156:20 163:5	data 54:16,18 67:9	dear 240:7
153:6 182:12	crimped 235:6	181:1 209:3	67:9 68:9,13 69:6	debate 90:22
183:3 185:3	crimping 176:21	213:13 217:5,6	01.7 00.7,13 07.0	debating 202:18



	104 17 102 20	, , , , , , , ,	1	170 1 0 106 14
<b>debbie</b> 83:9,19 84:3	184:17 192:20	departments 71:5	details 49:9 58:22	178:1,9 186:14
107:21 112:14	193:24 209:14	depended 218:6	59:2 66:6 105:14	devices 176:20
118:3 122:2,14,20	214:8 227:6	dependent 64:17	109:10 133:10	177:4 178:12
130:5,5 143:9	270:16 271:2,6	64:20 65:14,18	174:1 191:20	179:5
158:11 204:12	defectively 151:6	68:4,9 89:3	237:18	devoid 242:25
229:9 231:2,25	151:12	depending 64:5	determination	dezincification
233:12,21 235:4	defects 9:15	100:24 116:20	92:12 99:18 107:2	186:2,23 187:2,9
265:4	defendant 1:8,19	129:2	139:15 156:7,14	187:25 198:20
<b>debbies</b> 158:12	3:3	depends 57:14	185:7 200:16	199:3,4 202:23
<b>debit</b> 218:12 219:8	defensive 87:19	70:17 89:18 96:17	215:15 258:19	dialogue 230:2
<b>december</b> 5:8 20:1	<b>define</b> 177:5 189:3	102:5 106:12	determinations	diameter 201:22
23:25 24:1 199:21	240:24 241:5	136:11 141:21	128:5	<b>didnt</b> 59:1 63:8,20
213:4 226:19	253:22	262:15,15,16	determine 70:23	70:3 75:17 81:7
<b>decide</b> 30:5 31:21	defined 271:21	depiction 167:19	95:4,7 102:2	86:23 88:4,23
<b>decided</b> 30:9 33:16	definitely 235:7	171:12	103:6,12,24 105:7	91:9 96:11 103:16
46:9 133:13	definition 188:24	depleted 87:3	106:11,14 113:20	110:19 112:5,10
178:18	definitive 231:8	deponent 1:23	128:3,11,22 129:8	113:24 121:18
decides 119:15	definitively 234:17	deposed 227:9	143:15,18 178:20	126:11 138:19
<b>deciding</b> 26:20 58:3	<b>degree</b> 12:1,2,10,12	deposition 6:3,6	214:20 215:18	141:12 154:22
<b>decision</b> 21:6 27:2	105:7 126:16	7:24 8:13,14 9:2	230:6 233:15,25	155:19 156:6
31:11,18 33:12,20	230:6	24:21 25:11	235:25 237:21	158:6 161:2 162:2
42:13,19 43:15,22	<b>degrees</b> 204:14,21	228:24 265:23	243:13,17 270:15	162:2,24,24
43:24 44:8 52:2	255:10,11	266:2,4 273:14	272:1	165:12 174:8
54:1,18 55:11	deionization	depositions 8:4,9	determined 75:7	176:9 177:23
61:11,17 71:5	200:11	10:14 25:5,8	105:9 148:10	178:17 182:4
73:9 96:5 121:12	del 238:12	<b>depot</b> 191:8,14,14	193:13 215:9	192:13 209:15
258:21	<b>delay</b> 217:7 222:12	191:21,25 192:12	258:15	213:22 215:25
decisions 40:22	<b>delayed</b> 209:18	<b>describe</b> 20:3 26:15	determines 138:17	235:22 257:19
51:21 54:13,15,16	delays 219:4	27:12 67:2 142:7	determining	258:4 259:1
57:9 71:2,6,6 79:7	delignificationre	173:23 210:12	101:14 102:7	263:21 271:11
declining 118:24	187:5	215:19 229:18	143:12 156:25	272:1
<b>deeper</b> 75:1 109:5	delivering 133:7	235:14 269:25	<b>deutsch</b> 2:18 4:4,6	<b>die</b> 99:22,23 117:23
200:10	170:6	described 47:4	166:22,23 186:6,9	difference 52:5,6
<b>deeply</b> 185:21	demand 134:1	102:16 253:19	186:13,18,21	89:19 144:23,23
<b>defect</b> 9:13 95:5,6	demanding 201:21	describes 204:13	205:15,18,19	145:9 231:4
95:23 96:4 99:19	<b>dennis</b> 261:11	267:14	216:7,9 220:22	differences 27:13
99:21 103:19	dentification 203:7	describing 48:13	221:21,24 222:17	145:19 146:1
104:8,16 107:3	depalma 2:9	description 49:15	251:8,10 266:23	268:5
116:9,20 117:16	department 84:22	133:4 154:5	270:8,11 272:14	<b>different</b> 18:7 27:1
117:24 154:5	95:12 121:12	<b>design</b> 156:10	developed 33:25	32:18 44:21 53:4
156:10,17 185:8	154:16 155:17	designation 45:17	113:19 265:7,8	59:7 77:9,13,16
193:20 204:2	160:8 169:15	designed 170:14	development 4:14	96:18 100:5
239:14 243:19	183:25 195:8	destroyed 200:15	14:13 20:6 60:10	104:20 114:19,21
<b>defective</b> 8:18 9:11	200:22 206:7	<b>detail</b> 105:16	88:11 125:4	118:12 123:3
95:1 96:11 119:13	217:4 224:5	113:13,25 115:9	173:21	132:5,14,15
150:21,23 184:3	226:22	116:24	<b>device</b> 177:8,10	137:24 143:7
	l	l	I	I



	I	I	]	
152:9,22 170:23	discussion 43:19	223:5 224:24	domestic 176:22	138:13,19 139:10
172:9 173:7 190:4	72:11 90:17 131:3	229:7,11 237:1	252:25 262:21	139:12 141:19,19
198:12 201:19	203:1	238:25 239:17	<b>donnie</b> 83:13	142:3,19,19,20
203:25 209:4,5,21	discussions 40:14	249:23 251:18	<b>dont</b> 9:9,15,19,22	143:1,1,7,15
210:22 216:22	47:10 49:2 52:15	256:2,24 257:3	10:7 11:4 18:6,11	144:3 145:4,6,9
236:19 246:19	59:3 78:9,11,14	260:24 262:25	18:16 23:6 24:23	145:11,15,15
262:11,11	78:24 90:25 91:2	263:3 264:12,18	25:1 33:5,5,7,9,23	146:1,6,8,12
difficult 192:10	91:3,5 93:8 132:3	264:20,23 265:5	33:23 34:6,6,8,17	148:1,7 149:5,11
dig 75:1 109:4	200:5	265:24 266:14	34:21 35:4,4,9,9	149:15 152:2
digests 25:7	disposition 42:13	267:8,12,14,15	35:10,17,25 38:16	156:2,4 159:1,4,6
<b>digging</b> 200:10	118:11 164:24	documentation	38:22 39:1,1,3,3	161:25 163:8
diligence 37:5,7	<b>dispute</b> 226:25	216:23	40:3,13 42:2,9,11	165:3,10,13 166:2
dimensions 103:2	266:14	documents 25:2	42:17,17 45:10	166:8,12,12
231:4	dissipates 142:12	34:13 93:10 94:8	46:2 47:3 49:1	168:13 171:25
<b>direct</b> 4:3 7:11 79:9	distinction 256:18	140:17,22 167:16	50:4,12 51:12,18	172:10 173:8,8,15
168:16,21 169:23	distribution 20:11	187:11 195:17	52:19,25 53:9	175:10,23,25
171:17 267:7	83:13 267:22	<b>doering</b> 1:23 4:19	54:11 55:9,19,19	179:18 181:8,12
directed 137:14	distributor 208:18	6:3 7:13,23 48:1	56:7,7 57:20,22	182:9 183:9,10,11
150:9 160:14	222:11	166:23 267:4	57:24,24 59:5,12	183:18 184:5,7
direction 174:7	distributors 38:2,3	<b>doeringr2</b> 196:20	63:13,21 64:22	185:12 188:7,8,24
178:19 184:25	150:12 161:18	doesnt 58:13 70:12	66:4 67:20 70:21	189:5,5,10,18,19
206:8 274:10	192:23 260:11,12	77:11 104:21,25	71:17 72:11 74:1	191:20 192:4,6
directly 22:14,17	<b>district</b> 1:1,1,12,13	107:8 119:16	76:14,14,18,20,21	197:18 199:7,16
27:21 169:4 170:2	<b>division</b> 1:13 24:2,3	140:4 152:15	77:4,23 78:5 79:6	201:1,4,14 203:2
170:3 176:1	<b>dlt</b> 49:12	158:5 165:20,20	79:22 80:3,6,22	203:24 204:1,1,6
260:22 274:14	document 5:19	177:11 207:17	80:23 81:16 87:2	205:11 206:18
director 48:7,9	47:19,23 48:1	248:19,19,21	90:9 91:1,1,2	207:7,11 213:15
disagree 232:24	59:14,20,23,25	249:11 268:17	94:10 99:6 100:6	214:3,4,11,15,24
266:13	60:3,5,8,10 61:18	doing 10:24 62:4	100:10 101:21	214:24 215:4
disagreed 157:7	63:24 64:13,24	69:19 71:25 72:2	102:13 103:5,21	217:4,8,9 218:5
disclaimer 140:5	68:3,18 74:5,15	82:12 85:5,6	104:11,12 105:14	219:17 220:20
disclosing 248:23	75:21,22 78:22,23	109:16 110:3,12	105:16 107:1	221:8,8,18 223:8
discovered 181:24	88:12 89:13	112:3,5,7,12	108:24 109:20,24	225:11 227:15,16
192:19	107:13 130:14,18	129:18 143:10	110:11,11,12,17	227:16 228:3,19
discuss 37:18 79:3	130:20,21 131:4,9	158:7 166:4	110:17 112:25	230:15 232:9
84:12 90:9	132:15 136:24	172:10 190:6	113:1,1 114:1,9	233:11 237:6,19
discussed 24:24	137:1,3,10,18,21	208:17 209:15,24	114:20 115:7,25	238:15,16 239:1,1
37:10 72:15 79:5	139:3,19,24 140:4	226:13,15 229:23	116:14 117:20	240:1,1,3,10,19
123:14 128:1	141:3 150:4,9,10	230:25 231:10	118:21,23 119:24	242:13 244:13,13
131:1 159:2,8	159:3 163:24	235:23 236:2,11	122:17 124:11,21	244:18,18 245:13
239:7 269:6	164:4,19 167:15	237:19 240:15	126:3,18 127:2,9	245:15,17,17,17
discussing 61:8	168:15 183:21,22	248:6	127:10,13,22	246:2,14,24 247:9
91:14 131:10,12	200:3 201:10	doityourselfertype	128:9 130:7,20,20	247:10,19 248:12
131:15 162:1	203:12 206:1	178:1	130:24 133:9,23	248:12 249:1
164:14,24 202:4	207:15,23 211:24	dollar 217:22 218:1	133:25 135:24,24	250:24 252:7,16
234:14	216:12 222:20,22	218:1,3	136:2,14,15	252:20,20,21
	l	<u> </u>	l	<u> </u>



253:24,25 257:20
*
257:20 258:12,12
258:13,20,20,23
259:8 263:20
264:7,8,14 265:8
266:5,6 268:1
270:6,25
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
door 50:15 73:3
dosage 146:7
dose 234:4,5
double 149:9
doubled 56:19
doubling 191:2
doubt 53:17 76:24
doubting 53:19
doug 168:6 173:10
C
225:14 235:17
237:11,17 238:9
250:10,11,12,25
265:21 266:17,18
*
dougs 173:17
dow 23:3 201:8
203:11
dozen 102:15
dr 252:11
draconian 155:2
draft 154:22 252:4
261:17
<b>drafted</b> 65:22 66:3
137:3,5
drafts 257:8
<b>dramatic</b> 87:13,22
draw 246:5
drive 2:10 6:4
<b>drive</b> 2.10 0.4 <b>driven</b> 30:7 61:13
92:10 231:8
<b>driving</b> 148:24
<b>drove</b> 149:1
dry 154:23
<b>drywall</b> 152:6,14
267:18
<b>dual</b> 77:6
<b>dud</b> 178:23
due 37:5,7 64:18
65:19 99:18 116:1
116:19,19 227:23
. 11U.1/1/ 441.4J

231:13 245:3,22
<b>duly</b> 274:7
duplicate 40:5
duplication 39:13
162:25
<b>dura</b> 143:10
durapex 49:13
136:25 137:25
138:2,7,25 139:18
139:21
duration 205:8
220:19
<b>duties</b> 19:13
E

220:19			
<b>duties</b> 19:13			
E			
<b>e</b> 68:25 75:1 203:10			
221:9 222:3			
259:15 260:25			
earl 84:5 122:4,10			
122:14,16 252:5,9			
252:12,17,24			
254:3			
earlier 72:15 87:19			
88:12 91:19			
117:24 142:21			
157:14 162:15			
165:12,21 175:3			
179:12 188:21			
194:5 204:6 205:1			
225:13,15 233:5			
241:1 251:2 257:8			
262:17 270:23			
earls 252:10			
early 61:19 114:22 121:16 134:8			
121:16 134:8 161:9 187:3			
earnest 112:9 easier 32:1,3,11,12			
32:13,14 110:14			
east 160:25 161:1			
easy 106:2			
eb 27:25 28:3			
ebeam 72:24 73:5,8			
73:11,17,22 74:8			
74:12,22,23 82:14			
116:13 125:23			

7440	
126.1 6 146.7	
126:1,6 146:7 226:12,22 234:3	-
ebeams 126:12	
edge 134:3	
edit 217:7	
edits 217:8,9	
education 11:16	
12:17 137:17	
<b>effect</b> 36:6 71:13	2
251:15 254:1	,
effective 34:2	2
193:23	4
efficiency 136:18	2
efficient 134:15	-
211:1	4
effort 110:25	
129:23 191:24	
193:5	
efforts 92:24	,
130:11	,
<b>eight</b> 114:6 146:3 163:4	,
either 35:1 67:24	
81:7 100:3 101:1	,
124:1 133:11	,
137:6 145:17	
147:24 169:18,18	,
206:10 235:2	2
274:13	,
electron 28:1	,
electrons 72:19	,
elements 229:17	2
eliminating 203:3,4	2
<b>elkhart</b> 15:20,21	1
83:25 120:18,23	en
121:3,6,15,18	
122:10,13,20,25	en
129:12,16 130:1,9	
143:10 158:7	en
172:5 185:6	
190:15 <b>elses</b> 225:9	en
enses 223:9 email 2:13,24 3:10	en
4:13,16,21 5:3,4,5	en
5:6,7,8,9,11,12,14	en
5.15.40.2.4.11.12	

49:11,23 50:7,23
107:17,20 108:6
113:14,17 164:5
164:14,18,21,23
165:3,5 166:10
196:16,19,21
197:9,16,18
198:11 199:20,25
200:21 201:8,13
201:15,16 202:4
203:9 204:6,8
205:21,22,24
207:14,20 213:2,3
213:8 214:6
216:12 217:12
218:10,11 220:25
221:1,3,7 222:3 224:25 225:23
226:16,17,20
229:8,9,15 230:1
231:9,25 233:13
233:21 234:12
235:4,16 236:24
237:4,11 238:9,20
238:22 244:3,4,5
244:7,11,24 245:1
245:1 249:19
250:4,9,10,17
251:12,13,14,23
252:2,24 255:24
255:25 256:5
259:15,16,19,24
260:6 261:1,3,7
263:1,7,12,14
<b>emails</b> 56:15
197:11 203:23
<b>emery</b> 23:1 164:20
213:19 250:9
employed 73:16
228:3
employee 274:12
<b>employees</b> 39:19,21
40:10 141:3
employer 242:5
employment 8:5
encompassed

225:17
encompasses
167:15 171:7
197:10 199:21
205:23 207:15
213:1 216:11
218:9 221:2 222:2
244:1 249:20
260:24 265:12
encompassing 264:19
encourage 226:6
ended 21:17 203:24
204:1,7 236:2
258:13
enduser 96:5
128:13 230:18
260:20
endusers 192:20
225:24
energy 134:15
136:17
engineering 48:7,9
71:4 72:4 83:3,24
84:22 121:12
engineers 49:10
84:9 158:7 187:1
england 211:16
enlighten 266:21
enrolled 13:24
ensue 100:11
ensure 33:18 71:20
89:14 158:13
184:1 242:25
entered 28:13
entering 146:21
<b>entire</b> 52:16 170:6 270:2 271:1
entirely 54:16
227:23
entirety 164:4 entities 163:10
entitled 68:18 74:7
entity 39:6 58:20
63:10 70:24 72:22
76:12 77:2 162:18



5:15 48:2,4,11,13

extruding 99:23

170:15
entrusted 51:7
61:14 71:19 84:24
entry 58:9
equipment 41:6
73:7 226:18 230:8
236:4
equistar 64:8
erl 96:22,24 105:19
erls 96:20,20
escape 23:8
essentially 56:10
72:19 73:2 96:6
150:25 164:25
269:13
established 194:6
264:15
estmf2023 251:16
europe 132:8
evaluate 52:18 95:4
101:23 102:24
109:3 111:7,21
121:4,23 185:2,6
185:14 229:21
230:3 231:21
243:23 260:19
evaluated 120:20
222:13
evaluates 235:18
evaluating 34:2
100:21 104:20
112:15 122:6,16
122:20 185:10,16
229:24 236:20
249:8
evaluation 94:17
94:18 97:16 111:3
112:19 113:11
114:12 120:1
121:15 122:23
127:21 213:14
223:4 230:9,10,16
236:10 265:4
evansville 218:19
218:20
evening 136:21
_

<b>event</b> 150:21
eventually 87:24
206:21 236:3
everyones 34:19
evidence 128:11
230:21 248:16
268:23
evidencing 34:14
<b>evolved</b> 135:9,19
<b>evolving</b> 140:18,22
exact 38:16 40:4
63:21 113:8
145:16 152:2
181:8 188:24
220:9,16 259:8
270:25
<b>exactly</b> 41:25 42:9
50:4 55:19 56:1,7
88:24 99:6 114:20
121:11,13 133:17
135:24 136:2
165:3 181:12
201:1 213:16
214:4 221:18
227:7 234:10
246:14 251:25
253:25 258:14,20
263:21
exaggerating
256:18
examination 4:3,4
4:5,7 7:11 102:17
166:21 230:1
267:2 272:16
examining 106:9
<b>example</b> 114:22 116:16 119:13
123:21,24 155:3
268:25
examples 124:4
exceed 147:6 148:2
exceeding 147:7
148:12 159:23
161:21,24 228:15
exceeds 138:8,25
excessive 101:8
22CCBBITC 101.0

expect 232:7 expected 67:12 68:11 232:2,4 expecting 234:4 **expedite** 219:2,9 expenses 69:4 expensive 202:8 experience 130:1,2 157:23 189:6 **experienced** 9:16 **expert** 67:4,22 147:14 160:15 271:9 expertise 56:7 62:22 122:9 130:12 **experts** 125:24 126:2 185:22 **expires** 274:24 **explain** 52:9 144:20 179:16 241:12 explained 183:22 explaining 217:6 explanation 190:20 explicit 152:20 exploring 132:9 **expose** 255:16 exposed 27:16 98:9 100:1 109:24 115:17,18 235:24 exposure 119:5 205:3 237:8 expressed 191:24 **extend** 159:19,24 extending 159:14 extensive 183:19 extent 25:20 58:6 82:3 85:7 129:25 154:2 extrapolated 60:19 extrapolating 251:16 extremely 215:23 extrude 74:21 extruded 28:4 extruder 41:6

extrusion 73:7 172:20 173:1 226:22 extrusions 15:6 **f** 104:15 137:18 138:2,9 139:14 197:23,24,25 198:1,8,8 **face** 262:5 **facility** 5:16 33:14 41:1 73:1,2 80:11 103:14,18,25 104:7 114:13 142:11 241:12 242:17 264:20 **facing** 174:18 **facsimile** 2:23 3:9 **fact** 34:25 61:19 62:18 66:12 73:11 116:18 123:17 127:21 146:4,14 148:16 161:12 187:6 252:19 factor 148:21 255:5 **factors** 102:7 103:5 139:20 140:25 143:4 **factory** 180:18 239:14 **facts** 148:5 **factual** 266:9 **fail** 47:1 62:3 64:12 69:21 248:9 255:12 **failed** 36:17 53:21 54:8 59:10,13 63:6,17 66:13 67:6 72:8 96:16 103:4 104:14

120:12,13 122:21

139:8 182:20

200:8,9 204:15

213:14 215:19



	_	_	_	_
224:13,14,17,18	231:15	188:9	188:14 198:3	<b>flip</b> 232:11
224:18 227:24	<b>fairly</b> 133:6 185:12	<b>figure</b> 270:13	199:2,8,9 200:7,9	florida 210:20
270:21,22	193:5 218:21	<b>file</b> 219:3	200:18 214:25	flw 1:2
<b>failing</b> 64:5 84:16	236:19	<b>files</b> 25:16 94:13	215:12,19 222:12	focus 48:2 164:5
216:2 231:17	<b>fall</b> 86:17	195:4	223:20 224:8,11	171:4 178:8,12
fails 62:9 115:14	<b>familiar</b> 16:17,20	financially 274:14	235:13 269:4,6	focused 19:23
254:21	55:21 66:6 129:17	financials 83:5	270:5,17 271:7	160:16 199:10
<b>failure</b> 62:17 98:10	130:19 174:7	169:16	<b>fittings</b> 16:12,14,22	<b>folder</b> 264:15
99:18 100:7,16,22	185:17 212:11	<b>find</b> 26:17,24 88:23	16:24 18:7,9,12	folks 79:23 184:15
100:24 101:3,11	227:7	98:19 188:23	32:23 33:10 92:6	<b>follow</b> 91:19 98:5
101:15,24 102:18	<b>far</b> 10:24 52:12	189:7 192:7	120:17,23,25	100:10 123:14
102:22,22 103:24	56:17 106:2	234:16	121:2,4 124:8	193:20 194:4
104:1,19 105:10	118:24 220:17	<b>finding</b> 26:18	151:22 164:25	<b>followed</b> 187:23
105:21 106:4,14	<b>fast</b> 260:19	<b>findings</b> 263:13	171:1 176:5,9,16	following 64:9
108:9 109:19	<b>faster</b> 88:18	265:5	176:17 180:1,6,10	252:4
114:12 115:16,20	<b>fault</b> 156:16	<b>finds</b> 253:1	180:17,20,23	followup 270:9
115:21,22,23	fears 152:18	fine 10:23 72:1	181:6 182:3,20	<b>force</b> 30:7
116:1,8,18 117:20	features 32:1	164:9	183:13,15 184:4	<b>forces</b> 61:13
120:2,7 122:1	133:24 137:16	finish 10:18,21	184:13,17 185:1,5	foregoing 274:4
128:3,7,23 129:3	<b>feb</b> 5:9	18:23 75:21	185:6,10,16 186:2	foreign 99:22
129:18 138:9	february 224:13	<b>firm</b> 241:20 246:18	186:24 187:10,10	foremost 90:7
143:16,23,25	229:10 237:12	<b>first</b> 8:12,14 10:16	187:25 188:9	forgotten 116:13
148:11,12 185:2	<b>federal</b> 6:7 187:20	18:23 24:10 42:2	192:18 197:23,25	form 29:6 33:4
228:6 229:22	<b>fedex</b> 196:13	44:22 45:20 48:17	199:1,11,15,17	34:16 35:24 36:5
230:12,21 232:1	feedback 94:1	60:3,9 80:15	206:11,12,17	39:10 41:10 42:8
232:16,16,23	192:12	86:14 87:9 96:23	208:9,13,14	50:1,10 51:6 53:8
237:16 238:11	<b>feel</b> 96:15 164:4	97:25 99:2 102:25	209:14 210:6	54:10 55:8,18
247:24 251:16	<b>feeling</b> 133:21,22	104:11 107:22	211:8,8 212:2	56:22 58:24 61:3
254:18 255:17	199:16	110:8 130:17	213:14,18,23	61:22 62:11 63:18
272:10	<b>feet</b> 62:13,14 247:9	131:7,21 132:18	214:2,8,11,15,19	64:14 65:21,25
<b>failures</b> 9:17,18,23	fell 126:25	137:23 147:6	214:21 215:2,22	66:16 69:15 71:15
65:10 109:11	fellow 80:4	150:9 164:5,19	215:25 216:2,17	72:10 73:24 74:19
118:17,18 129:5	<b>felt</b> 44:5 54:5 66:18	167:5 186:25	218:18 221:12	76:9 80:20 84:19
144:7 162:8	66:20 117:22	194:18 202:20	222:10 236:16,20	89:17 92:15
181:10 185:20	121:3,21 126:8,10	206:25 213:3	241:4 245:24	103:20 104:9,17
188:8,11,14 232:7	133:17 144:19	224:12 231:24	246:13 254:2	107:11 115:24
232:25 233:8	170:22 171:2,3	232:13 235:15	257:13 269:7,11	129:20 136:10
234:23 235:18	177:25 178:6,7	240:23 242:23	269:13,23 270:1,2	138:12 139:5,9
238:12 269:5,6	213:25 215:3	252:2 257:16	270:14,16 271:1	145:1,22,25
270:1,5,23	226:13 231:7,20	264:7 269:5 274:6	272:5,9	151:16 152:1
fair 22:2 49:14,14	262:18	<b>fish</b> 38:4	<b>five</b> 85:13,14 181:9	153:9 155:13
57:1,3 72:22	<b>fide</b> 247:13	<b>fishes</b> 40:23	219:14	162:19 163:14
129:19 139:23	<b>field</b> 62:15,15 66:21	<b>fit</b> 174:19 214:7	<b>fix</b> 186:12	166:1 186:3 188:5
148:14 163:13	97:20,24 98:8	<b>fits</b> 179:1	<b>fixing</b> 182:2	189:4 193:18
165:1 182:21	99:18 103:8	<b>fitting</b> 95:2 177:7	fixtures 147:8	194:1,16 198:24
189:9 193:4	116:19 129:11	180:3,19 181:11	<b>fleet</b> 196:12	229:4 230:13
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>



	_	_	_	_
231:18 232:8,20	272:14	112:21	123:12 129:10	254:23 260:8
234:24 237:22	<b>future</b> 272:10	gentleman 172:25	133:12,13 139:14	272:23
238:8,14 243:21		gentler 155:4	143:12 146:15	<b>good</b> 7:13,14 10:24
244:6 245:10	G	geographic 232:2,5	151:4 152:9,24	46:13 48:18 52:18
246:22 247:6,16	<b>gage</b> 3:5	232:6	156:13 157:10	58:16 62:3 78:25
248:10 253:13,23	<b>gain</b> 68:11 98:12	<b>georgia</b> 149:4,14	160:1,4 166:6	90:5 103:1 106:23
254:16 255:8	126:1 130:11	158:19,19 210:16	169:6 175:11,13	119:18 122:4
262:14 264:22	149:24	210:21 212:9	186:11 189:10	123:8 133:6,18,22
265:1,10 266:11	<b>gained</b> 130:1,1	<b>germs</b> 142:3	192:6 201:24	141:23 156:18
272:4 274:9	<b>game</b> 58:10	gesturing 11:2	202:3,6 216:5	158:14 161:1
formalities 163:9	garden 6:3	getting 51:16 52:11	218:3 221:19	162:4 177:13
<b>format</b> 207:18	gary 125:11,12,17	78:6 103:23	249:13 251:6	185:18,20 187:16
<b>formed</b> 271:17	169:8	104:23 123:5	255:10 257:6	191:4 195:25
formulation 250:5	gauge 111:4,6,24	139:16 174:18	260:1 263:25	213:25 216:21
<b>found</b> 34:20,21	112:14 149:25	190:22 193:24	goal 68:25 69:1	226:3 236:18,20
144:12 150:1	<b>geers</b> 169:6	201:13 202:13	goes 50:14 64:4	262:22 263:21
189:15 200:11	<b>gel</b> 126:25 127:18	203:1,10 207:9	138:6 139:21	270:24 272:2
268:23	229:21 230:5,8,10	212:17 216:22,24	140:23 253:5	273:12
four 13:14 15:2	230:22 231:10,16	216:25 221:16	going 26:20,21	gooding 211:14,14
22:20 65:23 77:9	235:2 236:3	222:12,14 231:16	46:18 47:19 50:21	goodling 169:7
85:20 111:7	237:13,20,25	252:13 261:6	55:10 56:15 58:7	goodwill 213:21
189:13 191:16,18	239:10	263:7	58:25 71:24 77:21	214:3 217:20
192:5 197:4	general 14:11	<b>give</b> 7:7 10:17	84:13 86:4 87:22	222:14 272:25
224:14 250:20	19:20,22 20:4,18	30:13 31:14 37:22	88:9 92:25 96:23	273:9
fourth 223:5,13	22:5,6,18 24:1,7	82:2 85:6 108:8	96:24 98:7 106:24	goose 166:11
fraction 112:23	24:13 33:15 36:12	117:12 128:13	107:12 111:10	gosh 211:5
frank 252:11	36:15 45:13 51:15	134:3 169:21	113:2 114:6	<b>goto</b> 157:16
free 164:4 242:25	54:23 56:10 58:15	236:11 240:13	115:19 120:9,18	<b>gotten</b> 129:16
frequency 44:25	66:14 67:23 71:18	247:14 258:6	120:23,23 121:6	187:7 207:11
frequently 82:1	71:22 72:14 73:20	given 7:24 12:16	122:5,13 123:8	270:19
friendlier 32:2,11	76:5,16 80:19	119:20 138:14,15	126:12 129:12	<b>gouge</b> 106:8
fritolay 196:14	82:16 85:16 95:8	184:3 190:20	130:22 135:10	gouged 100:2
<b>full</b> 7:22 50:23	99:13 135:25	234:5	148:25 149:20	gouging 115:2
60:15 128:19	137:6,7 150:14	<b>giving</b> 139:23	152:24 154:18	128:16 228:21
154:1 182:21	153:18 155:22	150:14 184:10	156:24 162:6	governing 68:9
208:21	159:11 160:22	208:15	164:5 167:1	<b>governs</b> 126:21
<b>fully</b> 200:15	167:12 171:4	<b>gm</b> 118:5	174:22 175:11	grand 3:6
function 37:11	172:1 174:15	<b>go</b> 10:16 18:9 25:24	176:12 179:23	grant 23:3,6 201:8
39:18	190:13,16 194:23	31:11 34:18,20	186:18 187:17	203:11,17 235:17
functional 20:20	199:14 228:15,17	50:16 68:17 69:9	188:20 189:17	237:16 238:9
functions 20:11	239:2 241:3 254:4	88:20 91:17	194:19 199:5,16	<b>granted</b> 55:14,14
39:12,16 162:23	generally 19:11	100:21 101:13	199:17 202:9,17	60:17 64:18,21,22
162:24	20:3 26:15 27:12	102:7 108:22	202:25,25 203:2	65:18
<b>furniture</b> 152:6,13	140:16 161:5,15	110:22 113:6	209:25 211:23	grants 237:11
267:18	268:13	119:8 120:14	219:4 226:18	241:15
<b>further</b> 68:11 230:7	generated 110:14	121:15 123:7,9,9	244:21 250:5	great 73:14 98:2
	I	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	l



hamilton 218:23	headhunter 195:22	<b>hide</b> 80:9 81:3	home 44:24 70:11
hand 7:4 267:9	headquartered		117:9 134:13
<b>handful</b> 180:17	198:6 208:4	C	146:21 147:9
181:6 215:2 216:1	210:15 211:15	67:10 98:9 100:1	149:7,13,22,25
270:4	headquarters	100:16 106:5	157:25 191:8,14
handle 32:1,11	39:15 83:25	111:19 115:17,18	191:14,21,25
49:10 211:15	190:14	116:2 133:19	192:12 200:12,17
handled 66:5 239:5	hear 227:18	139:11 142:16	202:1 203:22
<b>handles</b> 219:18	heard 10:2,13	144:15 146:14,20	254:7
handling 95:13	141:2,4 168:6	148:16,20 149:6	homeowner 110:24
156:19 210:1	hearing 80:15	149:10 158:18,25	117:12,15 128:13
228:11,15,17	heat 28:23,23 29:14	159:12 161:4,13	149:23 164:15
hands 58:23 166:6	136:18	161:17,19 189:13	165:23 200:7
handyman 157:24	heater 109:23	189:16,19 205:2	249:17
<b>happen</b> 14:23	111:18,18 179:25	212:10 234:3	homeowners 268:7
120:5 159:17	180:2 200:14	242:9 247:18,23	<b>homerun</b> 206:13
175:13 184:11	heaters 147:8	248:8,17,23,25	homes 44:5 92:23
215:25 248:4	heavilyregulated	249:4 254:5,23	144:5,6,14
270:23	63:3	268:10,14,16	<b>honcho</b> 208:6
happened 10:7	hed 56:20 158:5	highdensity 27:17	hope 88:2
14:24 32:21 41:20	help 20:24 110:7	28:2	host 108:19
42:9 70:11 102:8	111:2 112:18	<b>higher</b> 46:4,6,18	<b>hot</b> 134:17 135:1,6
106:25 115:3	125:24 155:17	*	135:23 219:1
			hotel 9:3
· ·			<b>hotspot</b> 159:14
	_		210:4 212:11
	_	O	233:6
			hour 25:1 148:25
			hours 136:19 174:6
		C	house 57:21 111:6
			142:5 148:20
	· ·	hilton 6:3	149:8 189:9
		hired 125:23	236:14 248:17
			273:7
		•	houses 228:7
	' '	•	248:13,14 249:8
	' '		263:11
			housing 85:24
	,		202:15
		_	<b>hr</b> 40:6 83:16
			huge 163:6
			<b>hundred</b> 220:10
			hundreds 181:23
l '			184:21
124:22 208:6	161:19 218:24	holes 179:20	hurt 70:4
	hand 7:4 267:9 handful 180:17 181:6 215:2 216:1 270:4 handle 32:1,11 49:10 211:15 handled 66:5 239:5 handles 219:18 handling 95:13 156:19 210:1 228:11,15,17 hands 58:23 166:6 handyman 157:24 happen 14:23 120:5 159:17 175:13 184:11 215:25 248:4 270:23 happened 10:7 14:24 32:21 41:20 42:9 70:11 102:8	hand 7:4 267:9 handful 180:17 181:6 215:2 216:1 270:4 handle 32:1,11 49:10 211:15 handles 219:18 handling 95:13 156:19 210:1 228:11,15,17 hands 58:23 166:6 handyman 157:24 happen 14:23 120:5 159:17 175:13 184:11 215:25 248:4 270:23 happened 10:7 14:24 32:21 41:20 42:9 70:11 102:8 106:25 115:3 116:14 119:22 144:16,21 148:19 156:13 196:3,5 227:18 230:4 238:17 240:18 261:24 263:18 happening 135:18 149:24 178:2 198:17 213:24 250:7 happy 56:20,24 hard 179:9 hat 196:1 havens 1:25 6:8 274:22 havent 219:25 havethird 70:8 hayes 169:5 head 11:1,1 35:11 head quartered 198:6 208:4 210:15 211:15 head quarters 39:15 83:25 190:14 hear 227:18 head 10:2,13 hear 227:18 hear 28:23,23 29:14 hear 199:23 111:18,18 179:25 180:2 200:14 heater 109:23 111:18,18 179:25 180:2 200:14 heaters 147:8 heavilyregulated 63:3 heaveli'le 7:24 heavilyregulated 63:3 heaveli'le 7:24 heavilyregulated 63:3 heaveli'le 7:25 helpe 17:24 helps 261:16 heres 213:23 hes 21:15 48:13 50:11 68:15 74:24 75:9,11 78:21 108:24 109:18 157:21,22,24 heavent 219:25 havethird 70:8 hayes 169:5 head 11:1,1 35:11 head quarters 198:6 208:4 210:15 211:15 headquarters 39:15 83:25 headquarters head 10:2,13 hear 20:24 hear 20:24 hear 20:24 hear 20:25 head 10:2,13 hear 20:24 hear 20:24 hear	hand 7:4 267:9



261:25 262:1

**holmes** 1:14

hydrostatic 132:2

208:3

**headed** 189:25

133:20	25:22 47:22 59:15	252:1,7,11,15,18	154:13 163:5	92:11 98:18
hypothetical 54:22	164:3 229:18	254:18 258:12	inconclusive	126:15 132:1
57:23 104:10	267:8	266:5 271:8,13,13	102:18	135:19 187:5,9
37.23 104.10	illinois 2:11	273:12	incorporated	196:12 205:12
I	im 8:18 12:8,8	immediate 255:17	211:14	industrys 54:14
iabmo 70:15	29:12,16 38:24	immediately	increase 115:7	influences 109:21
iampo 68:25	39:23 41:11 42:15	148:22 181:2	159:20 205:2	influential 198:7
iampro 34:20	43:12 45:9 47:13	192:22	increased 121:20	inform 174:10
iapmo 53:5 54:4	47:14,19 49:5,8	impact 57:24 58:4	incremental 114:4	193:15
77:6,9 78:7,12,25	50:21 52:9,11,11	63:20 66:18,20	incumbent 192:8	information 34:22
124:1	52:18 56:1,9,24	87:22,25 142:3,11	incumbents 192:9	37:22 65:13 94:24
id 11:13 20:23 69:4	66:9 67:4,4,24	impacted 74:11	independent 31:19	96:6 108:8 109:20
127:10 160:1	70:8,9 71:5 72:12	85:25	68:3,12 70:8	115:7 117:1
169:20 171:6	72:18 78:7,9	impetus 97:17	138:6,25 191:23	137:12 138:16
177:12 189:10	86:23 91:16,16	implemented	index 4:1	150:14 166:3,5
203:23 211:6	93:24 96:22,23,24	132:21 133:14	indiana 11:19 12:7	221:16 235:17
213:21 216:10	99:4,4 107:12,16	235:21	120:18 190:15	237:14 258:7
259:10 267:7	112:10 113:6,23	important 57:4	218:20	260:21 266:19
269:5 270:3,3	115:15 117:9	76:6 92:19 237:14	indicate 51:2	informations 34:17
idea 78:25 106:23	119:3,18,18,22	237:20 238:2	232:18 238:4	informing 96:5
156:4 184:16	121:9,11,13	importing 178:2	indicated 51:4	161:18
210:25 214:1	122:16 123:8	impressed 226:13	indicates 64:11	infrared 111:15
259:5	124:8,10 130:19	improper 101:24	134:24	infrastructure
identification 47:21	135:14,17 136:12	128:6,22	indicating 51:24	159:24
59:18 107:14	137:4,4 138:19	<b>improve</b> 58:7 92:13	232:21	<b>initial</b> 43:15 263:13
130:15 136:22	142:14 147:13,13	improvement 74:8	indication 135:19	initially 87:23
150:2 153:14	153:15 154:15	110:3 115:5	indicator 231:6	92:19
163:23 167:13	155:18 157:22	improvements	indirectly 274:14	initiated 36:23
171:15 197:14	164:1 165:12	114:5 116:24	individual 184:12	95:20 119:11,17
199:23 204:10	166:23 167:1	inch 179:5 181:14	individually 1:16	143:9
205:14 207:21	168:13 175:16	181:14,14,14,15	2:16	injuries 154:7
212:3 216:16	181:5,21 182:16	181:15 202:3	individuals 79:21	inn 6:4
218:14 220:23	183:10,20 185:12	243:2,5 255:11	indulgence 167:4	<b>input</b> 231:16
222:5,18 225:1	186:4,19 187:11	inches 114:25	industrial 12:19,20	inquiring 261:12
229:13 239:22	188:15,20 189:17	179:25	13:9 14:6,21	inserted 177:8
244:9 249:25	189:18 194:19	incidental 154:4	15:13,17 24:2,3,8	<b>inside</b> 84:21
256:21 261:4	195:10 203:5	include 188:22	24:10 92:2 123:22	insights 260:5
263:5 264:24	205:13 207:2,2,8	191:7 206:8	124:9	inspection 101:21
265:15	211:23,23 212:10	225:21 267:17	industries 18:6,14	112:4,13 113:12
identified 74:12	221:17 223:9,13	included 68:10	27:9 257:14	113:15,22,23
158:24 175:3	223:13 227:7	117:15 182:14	<b>industry</b> 36:6,9	115:5 143:21
268:11	228:3,9,19 231:24	206:15 213:3	52:13,16,21 53:12	inspections 113:5
identify 105:21	233:18 234:4,10	includes 45:21	62:1,23 63:2,3	113:21 142:13
234:16	238:11 240:16	167:11	66:23 67:16 77:11	157:15,16,19
identifying 235:11	245:2,2 247:7	<b>including</b> 19:7 48:3	78:20 79:13 89:25	158:1 231:7
<b>ill</b> 10:17,25 11:7,8	250:24 251:3,22	84:8 141:1 154:6	90:3,6 91:14	inspector 12:25
	I	I	I	I



13:2,6,16 57:21	208:23 216:20,23	98:15 109:8 110:1	isnt 23:10 69:18	ive 45:15 56:19
70:11	217:11,13,17	200:8 203:17	119:16 123:18	78:5 117:10
install 32:3,14 98:3	222:14 258:8,10	investigation 26:24	129:7 161:20	132:24 133:9
98:19 179:4	insured 183:3	33:11 95:20 104:5	180:3	136:6 141:2 167:9
installation 9:22,25	insuring 71:20	105:19 106:20	iso 241:12,14,19	184:18 197:25
10:1 100:3,9	integer 132:2	110:3 114:17	242:5,11,18,18	241:24 246:8
101:24,25 102:12	integers 44:18	123:3 180:21	issue 87:20 93:15	264:7
122:6 128:6,22,23	96:23 134:21	264:22 265:1	94:20,25 96:8	
140:8,14 146:24	<b>integrated</b> 190:6,12	investigative	104:24 114:23	J
161:23 224:19	integration 21:16	144:11	117:6 120:6	james 1:3,3 2:4,5
227:24 228:6	190:2,10	investment 28:13	154:20 164:25	164:16
248:2	intend 163:8	32:6 133:6 175:9	186:2 189:20	jana 53:5,6,6 60:10
installations 111:11	<b>intended</b> 240:5,25	investments 110:6	193:7 197:19,20	79:10,16,17,20
installed 98:9 117:9	267:21	investors 163:17	198:19,22 201:14	81:17,21,25 82:1
139:22 143:14	interacted 81:24	invited 226:9	204:6 206:21	91:3,6 125:14
184:4 208:12	interactions 79:15	involve 15:23 37:7	213:12 214:8,16	230:5 236:2 239:9
214:13 224:13	79:20	158:1	215:1,16 219:1,5	<b>janas</b> 53:18
243:18 248:13,15	interchangeable	involved 8:21 9:22	219:8,11 221:9	<b>january</b> 1:24 4:14
268:21	178:6	9:25 13:6 17:14	223:6,17,20	6:5 60:1 216:13
installer 100:3	interest 116:25	21:15 26:8 37:2	224:11 250:18,22	233:22 234:13
101:20	interested 93:17	42:19 43:15,22	250:25,25 252:1,6	235:17
installers 44:4	97:11,18 274:13	51:10,11 52:16	261:19 266:9,12	<b>jarod</b> 217:3,12
98:20 179:6,9	interesting 247:21	59:1,6 71:1,5,6,22	267:22 269:17,24	<b>jarrod</b> 216:13
installing 101:20	264:2	79:16,17 80:3,5	<b>issued</b> 119:19	244:25
instance 50:5 96:2	internal 95:19	81:17 83:8 85:8	issues 9:22,25	<b>jeff</b> 169:5 244:16
100:19 102:19	internally 131:16	90:19,20 96:4	35:13,20,22 36:11	244:24
114:18 157:5	international 138:7	97:4 98:13 173:25	56:17 62:15,16,19	jeopardize 70:1
instances 106:13	147:18,19,20,25	174:8 175:2	63:8 71:22 84:12	jeopardy 60:25
107:7 115:12	<b>internet</b> 245:4,8,13	180:16,17 182:12	90:9 95:13 97:20	jersey 1:1
117:14 156:3	245:18	209:18,21 216:17	97:23 98:7 109:3	<b>jim</b> 169:5
189:15	interviewed 37:9	216:22 218:11	130:19 141:14	<b>job</b> 10:24 13:1,9
institute 36:11	93:13 196:1	221:10 224:6,7	150:19 156:6,7,19	14:11,11 16:11
79:13 90:8,24	interviews 93:4,7	228:7 244:12	161:10 165:19	19:12 20:3 21:12
instrument 111:15	intricacies 71:18	251:24 257:5,7	166:4 174:11	56:10 72:5 73:14
111:25	introduced 178:4	involvement 17:6,8	180:25 181:1	158:3,3 190:22
instrumentation	inventories 187:19	26:12,14 43:13,17	186:23 187:2	191:5 196:2
110:6 111:1,2	inventory 41:20	79:10 81:21 82:9	198:13 199:6	263:21
113:22	42:10,14 86:24	82:11 95:9 156:25	210:6 214:14	<b>jobs</b> 15:23 174:23
instruments 111:20	87:1 260:11,14,16	173:24	224:8 228:11,14	<b>john</b> 1:15 2:15 33:1
111:23 112:12	invested 236:4	involves 72:18	228:23 229:18	33:3,10 107:22,23
143:19	investigate 103:9	131:21 208:8	233:4 234:16,17	107:24 257:2
insufficient 105:10	113:2	221:11 241:13	236:21 262:18	joined 33:3
insulation 204:5	investigated 10:2	242:13	268:22,24 269:3	<b>joint</b> 177:6
insurance 51:8	62:16 189:21	involving 36:11	item 85:4 199:18	<b>jr</b> 1:13
78:19 165:18	233:7 263:10	242:2 245:25	items 202:22	judge 1:13,14
182:5,23 183:11	investigating 32:18	<b>ipc</b> 147:24 148:13	itll 10:22	<b>judy</b> 1:3 2:5
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	I



Page 17

		<b>2.1.2.1.2.1</b> 2.10.10		100 17 17 110 17
july 155:11 250:23	109:6 110:1 117:6	34:2,6,17,18,19	94:1,10 95:7,23	139:15,15 140:17
263:2	118:16 122:8	34:21 37:10 38:17	95:24,25 96:1,3,4	140:18,19,20,20
<b>june</b> 145:8 244:4	128:1 130:6,10	38:18,24 39:1,15	96:10,11,16 97:10	140:22,23 141:9
261:2	133:7 134:18,19	39:21 40:3,13,19	97:13,15,15,19,20	141:10,11,13,14
	137:21 144:5	41:20 42:11,17,17	98:1,1,5,6,14,15	141:14,19,21,21
<u>K</u>	145:3 148:3,5,24	43:16 44:2,5,24	98:20,20,22,23	142:6,14,17,19,20
kalberer 168:5	150:13 152:7,19	46:12,13,17,19,19	99:6 100:4,10	143:1,1,6,19
173:11 225:14	156:14 157:16,23	46:20 47:6,8,14	101:4,16,22 102:6	144:16,19 145:5,7
kalberers 225:16	157:24 158:9,17	47:18 48:23 49:5	102:7,13 103:2,4	145:9,13,13,14,15
kansas 3:7	158:21 159:25	49:5,6,7,8,9,10	103:5,7,10,10	145:16,19 146:1,4
<b>kate</b> 23:1,6 164:20	160:5,14,14 161:7	50:2,4 51:7,8,9,12	104:12,12,23,23	146:6,8,9,12,13
165:22 213:19	169:9,21 170:4	51:12,19,20,21	105:24 106:1,2,3	146:24 148:7,21
kathleen 250:9	172:7,9 174:25	52:1,4,5,7,11,16	106:4,8,11,23,24	149:5,10,11,15
keep 172:7 209:6	180:3,21 187:6,21	52:17,19,20,20,22	107:5 108:24	151:1 152:2,6,12
254:17 263:15	189:17 200:4,19	53:1,15 54:1,5,11	109:4,16,23,24	152:13,16,16,22
keeping 117:1	209:16 210:3	54:11,18,21 55:10	111:8,11 112:14	152:23 154:15,17
kelly 1:4 2:6	217:15 218:6	55:19,19 56:7,7	112:22 113:4,6,7	154:18,22,24,24
<b>kemp</b> 169:7	219:1 229:25	56:12,14,16 57:9	113:18,19 114:3,6	154:25 155:14,19
ken 4:16,21 81:2	232:15 235:23,25	57:10,10,11,13,16	114:10,20,21,25	156:2,2,3,6,16,17
107:21 108:11,12	236:9 239:2	57:20,20,22,24	114:25 115:6,6,8	156:23 157:3,20
108:23 109:17	240:20 255:5	58:10,25 59:4,5	115:15 117:5,18	157:23,24 158:2,8
113:17 164:19,23	kinder 155:4	61:9,12,15,15,16	117:18,20,25	158:10,13,15,24
165:10,13 166:9	kinds 92:1 153:2,7	61:24 62:14,19	118:10,11,12,16	159:2,2,4,6,15,18
166:13 200:23	158:8 179:17	63:8,10,13,21	118:17,19,20,20	159:25 160:3
213:4 221:1	180:2 190:4	64:22 66:4,4,9	118:21,22,24	161:6,23,23,24,25
234:13 244:5	198:13	67:4,5,13 69:4,16	119:24 120:8	162:1,1,3,20,21
kenneth 1:15 2:16	kink 106:5	69:25 70:2,7,12	121:11,18,21	162:22 163:3,5,7
kentrol 16:2 24:9	kinked 106:2	70:15,18,19,20	122:7,16,17,24	163:18,19 164:3
kentucky 6:5,9	kkuhlman 3:10	71:2,18,19,20,24	123:25 124:2,7,11	165:2,3,10,11,11
196:9 274:2	knew 71:24 126:10	72:3,4,13,14	124:19,21,21	165:13,15,15,20
<b>kept</b> 49:7 108:19	149:19 166:11	73:13,15 75:3	125:9,13,14 126:3	165:21 166:2,2,6
141:20 147:4	174:15,16 181:2	76:14,14 77:4,10	126:7,9,12,12,13	166:8,12,12 168:4
160:23 268:3	193:20 202:24,24	77:23 78:5,8,16	126:15,18,24	168:8,12,13
kevin 3:4 11:12	214:22,23,23	78:20,21 79:11,11	127:9,12 128:16	169:14,15,16
24:22,24 25:19	270:18,18,19	79:14,16,17,19	128:17 129:3,9	170:21,22,25
267:4	knock 50:14	80:3,22,22 81:4,9	130:3,5,6,7,11,19	171:23,25 172:4
killing 142:2	knocking 216:21	83:2,3,5 84:7,21	130:20,20,24	173:2,4,5,5,8,8,14
<b>kimberly</b> 1:3 2:3	know 9:16,19 10:2	84:21,23,24 85:18	131:20 132:10	173:15,16,25
kind 17:13 18:23	10:7 11:5,12,22	85:19,23 86:3	133:1,3,4,9,10,12	174:1,2,6,14,15
21:20 22:15 34:4	13:3 19:13 20:10	87:2,2,4,8,12,18	133:13,17,18,25	174:16,16,17,22
40:23 47:10 58:11	20:12,24 21:17,18	87:21 88:1,6,8	134:1,17,18 135:8	175:6,6,7,10,21
59:7 67:8 68:12	23:6,12,19,19,23	89:2,3,21,21 90:6	135:9,18,20,25,25	175:23 177:13,23
70:6 78:17 82:24	25:1 26:15,18,19	90:10,11,12,12,13	136:2,2,11,14,19	173.23 177.13,23
83:4,22 91:17	26:22 28:9 30:9	90:18,24 91:1,2,2	136:21 137:3,10	179:9 181:2,3,4,8
96:18 97:15,23	30:18 31:6,21	91:4 92:2,6,13,18	137:13,17 138:16	181:22 182:3,3,6
100:13 104:10	32:5,8,8 33:3,15	92:21 93:11,20	138:19 139:10,12	182:7,8,8,9,10
	32.3,0,0 33.3,13	, 2, 21 , J, 11, 2U	150.17 157.10,12	102.7,0,0,7,10
<u> </u>				



100 10 10 10 1 7 7	<b></b>	l., , ,,,	1	1
183:18,18 184:5,5	236:9,17,18,19,20	kshamberg 2:13	95:3 109:18	154:3 155:12
184:6,7,8,9,12,13	238:16,17 239:6,7	kuhlman 3:4 4:5,7	112:19 120:18	246:18
184:18,19,19,20	240:1,5,5,14,21	25:22 29:6 33:4	121:18 129:8	lawrence 2:18
184:20,21 185:12	241:1,16,17 242:8	34:16 35:24 36:5	143:10 185:5	185:25
185:13,17,18,21	242:13,13,14,16	39:10 41:10 42:8	label 17:11 18:1	laws 150:15 151:25
187:16,19 188:7	242:19 244:18	47:11 50:1,10,16	26:19	154:12
188:10,24 189:5,5	245:2,6,11,14,15	51:6 53:8 54:10	labeled 64:24	lawsuit 195:7
189:10,17 190:3,3	245:16,24 246:2,8	55:8,18 56:22	<b>labor</b> 17:24	lawsuits 245:25
190:5,5,6,10,11	246:9,9,12,15,15	58:24 61:3,22	laboratories 60:11	246:11
190:23 191:15,15	246:23,24,25	62:11 63:18 64:14	laboratory 53:7,13	lawyer 154:22
191:19,20 192:4,4	247:8,10,10,17,19	65:21,25 66:16	53:15	155:6 163:8
192:6,10,24 193:3	247:19 248:3,5,6	69:15 71:15 72:10	labs 53:5,6,7 79:10	<b>lawyers</b> 94:8,9
193:7 194:19	248:12,12,13,17	73:24 74:19 76:9	230:5 236:2	laymans 67:15
195:4,6,8,9,12	248:19,20 249:1,1	80:20 84:19 88:18	lacking 74:13,24	ldeutsch 2:24
196:2,24,25 197:2	249:1,2,4,7,8,9	89:17 92:15	landing 32:19	<b>lead</b> 65:14 98:10
198:11,25 199:16	250:6,7,8,18,24	103:20 104:9,17	landscape 17:15	100:7 187:21
199:18 200:18	251:1,2 252:20	107:11 115:24	<b>language</b> 59:7 61:1	188:2 199:4
201:1 202:5,25	253:24,25 254:4,6	123:5 129:20	89:10 117:12	200:12
203:1,25 204:1,6	256:12 257:20,20	136:10 138:12	138:4 152:2,20	leadership 82:22
204:23 205:2,4,13	258:12,12,13,20	139:5,9 145:1,22	153:16 154:2,23	<b>leading</b> 26:16 32:17
206:9,11,14,18	258:21,23 259:1,3	145:25 151:16	155:9	145:4
207:2,7,8,8,11	259:5,8,9 262:1	152:1 153:9	laptops 172:9	leads 27:18
208:5 209:3,13	262:15,18,19,19	155:13 157:10	lara 172:13	leak 101:4 243:20
210:5,6,10 211:8	262:21 263:21	162:19 163:14	laracuenta 172:14	247:14
211:17 212:8,10	264:8,8,14 265:8	166:1 186:3 188:5	172:15	leaks 203:22 212:7
213:15,15,20,21	265:9,10,16,20	189:4 193:18	large 50:25 60:20	246:20 247:3
213:23 214:3,10	266:18,19 267:18	194:1,16 198:24	74:25 222:11	263:11,12
214:11,23,24	268:2,4,18 269:21	229:4 230:13	225:25 274:2	learn 98:20
215:3,4,11,11,17	269:22 270:21,25	231:18 232:8,20	largely 92:10	learned 126:4
215:21 216:2,18	270:25 271:2,3,8	234:24 237:22	larger 202:9	159:25 187:6
217:1,2,4,8,25	271:15,15,16	238:8,14 243:21	largest 53:14	learning 162:6
218:25 219:1,2,17	273:3,5,5,6	245:10 246:22	larry 23:21 166:23	learnings 160:6
219:19,25 220:6	knowing 68:15	247:6,16 248:10	185:18 207:12	260:4
220:10,10,11,20	126:11 145:2	251:6 253:13,23	209:19 216:1	leased 73:5
221:11,14,18	237:13,18	254:16 255:8	252:22	<b>leasing</b> 226:21
222:22 223:7,8,24	knowledge 36:7,8	262:14 266:11,16	<b>las</b> 141:12 201:9	leave 21:9 111:5
224:4 225:7,13,18	40:11 43:8 53:23	267:3,4 270:6	lasted 174:5	195:20
225:19,25 226:3,9	85:9 87:5 122:23	272:4,15,17	<b>latent</b> 243:19	leaves 237:25
226:12,13,14	126:1 128:24	273:12	latest 242:10	<b>lebanon</b> 5:16 40:25
227:15,16,16	171:21 239:2	kulhman 123:7	lathrop 3:5	72:25 112:15
228:1,3,5,10,19	242:23 269:15,19	<b>kyle</b> 2:8 7:15 44:20	lathropgage 3:10	114:13 120:20,24
229:20,24 230:2	knowledgeable	49:5 109:25	latitude 57:11	122:13,24 129:12
230:15,21,22	121:25	124:11	laughed 196:2	158:15 172:12
231:2,4,5,10,20	known 45:14		launched 250:6	190:15 225:6
231:22,23 232:5,9	144:15 149:10	L	260:3	232:14 264:20
233:3,7 235:23	165:22 199:6	<b>lab</b> 63:6 69:6,12	law 151:5,7,13	265:3
	I	<u> </u>	I	1



	l			ı
led 26:13 187:8	level 11:16 59:1	<b>linx</b> 176:18 180:12	123:23,24 124:5	215:14 218:25
190:25 241:2	102:24 111:25	180:17 181:7,25	124:10,16,19	219:3 231:12
lee 224:3,3	115:9 121:20	182:4,5,11,20	lists 210:8	234:19 265:9
<b>left</b> 15:19 18:24	127:18 142:16,17	183:2 184:3	<b>lite</b> 2:9	longer 39:15 49:25
33:5,6 58:22 65:2	142:22,24 175:9	192:18 208:9	litedepalma 2:13	55:15 71:13 115:1
85:9,11 103:17,22	175:11,15,22	212:2 214:7,8,11	<b>lithia</b> 210:16	122:20 173:3
103:25 104:7	188:23 189:2,14	214:14,15,17,19	litigation 195:1,2	217:2 228:3
110:21 132:24	204:15 205:8	214:21 215:22	246:3,6	longterm 33:24
149:25 163:2	217:22 219:16	216:17,19 217:5	little 18:22 21:6	look 25:22 54:17
168:6 173:14	245:8 255:4	217:13,17 218:12	32:1,3 37:21	57:21,22 65:2
194:22 195:18	260:11	218:17,22 219:7	42:21 52:9 59:16	95:18 98:18
197:1 199:14	levels 115:19	219:11 220:7,7,18	67:1,2 70:22 75:1	101:19 107:20
207:8 227:17	189:20 253:1,6,7	221:12 222:10	75:7 81:23 85:17	117:13 125:22
231:11 243:24	253:16,19 254:5	224:8,10,16 269:6	91:19 108:8 109:7	128:15,18 130:5,8
269:20,21	lewknor 134:10	269:16 270:12,16	114:7 126:6	130:9 144:20
lefthand 222:21	liabilities 259:2	270:17	127:20 129:17,17	152:22 153:25
legal 108:20 117:2	liability 96:13	list 68:25 158:21,23	158:2 177:15	158:4 166:16
154:16 155:17,21	150:15 151:5,13	202:22	186:13 192:17	167:10 171:6,10
163:10 195:8	151:25 154:12	listed 57:8 65:10	242:20 251:25,25	183:2 185:21
217:25 256:16	155:12	71:8 77:17	262:22	189:11 197:8,12
258:19 273:3	liable 152:16	<b>listing</b> 34:19,25	live 142:10	199:19,22 201:5
legislation 187:20	life 205:4,6,9	35:3 49:17 50:7	lived 149:18 168:12	205:20,25 207:13
lehman 5:4 199:21	255:17,18	54:2,3,8,13,15	183:25	207:19 209:20
200:20	<b>light</b> 188:11	55:22,25 56:2	llc 2:9	212:24 216:10,14
lends 143:4	liked 95:16	57:4,12,13,25	llp 3:5	218:8 220:24
length 102:5	likes 222:12	59:4 60:23 61:15	local 211:2 213:19	221:4 222:1,7,19
172:22	<b>limit</b> 70:21 108:21	62:5 63:20 64:18	localities 248:24	224:20,23 229:6
<b>letter</b> 4:19 5:10,13	113:5 140:6 147:9	65:14,18 68:4,4	located 20:23 72:25	229:10 231:2
50:23 95:22,22	<b>limited</b> 96:7 153:17	68:12,19,23,24,24	160:25 168:8	236:22 238:19
105:20 114:16,18	154:6 230:15	69:5,11 70:2,3,4	location 221:14	239:16,20 241:22
138:22,23 152:4	<b>limits</b> 98:4 147:1	70:14 71:4,12,13	232:1	241:25 243:25
152:17 153:1	149:3 161:21	71:17 76:13,18,21	locations 231:17,20	244:6 245:8 247:7
154:11,18,19	255:3	76:23 77:3,6,6,22	268:10,11	249:18,22 251:11
155:11,15,18	linda 1:3 2:4	78:2,7,15,18,25	locust 2:20	251:17 252:8
192:22 239:19,21	line 16:3 48:18	79:1 91:22 104:23	logger 111:5	254:24 255:22
239:24 240:2,5,23	60:19 66:11 99:22	124:1,2 138:15	logistics 82:22	256:1,23 259:13
241:7,10 242:3,21	117:23 140:19	listings 56:17 57:13	long 13:13 14:8,25	259:18 260:23
242:22 256:25	165:4 179:1	60:17 64:10,20	16:4 17:1 19:16	262:24 264:17
257:6,10,11,17,23	186:15 191:17,25	66:6,18 68:9	19:25 24:25 31:13	265:11,13
258:6 267:19,21	192:1 210:9 223:6	69:18 70:8,10,19	32:7 66:8,8 76:22	looked 115:15
267:25 272:18	223:12,14,23	70:20 71:19 72:14	87:1 98:5 105:2	215:13,14 217:21
273:2,4	224:2,12 240:6,21	76:21 77:7,8,11	105:24 114:24	238:16
letterhead 257:1	linear 62:3	77:24 78:3 82:6	121:1 128:17	looking 28:15
letters 96:19,20	lines 159:19	84:21 85:2 91:21	148:25 162:17	35:12 50:20 88:12
97:6 172:10	linking 27:24 133:8	91:23 92:4,4,7	184:18 187:6	88:24 92:18 96:9
257:25	237:14	104:19 123:17,18	191:13 211:7	101:5,17 102:2
				,1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1,



114:3,5 122:3,5	246:11 247:9	80:17 89:8 156:13	manual 100:9	marginally 64:5
129:1,8 143:16	248:13,14 253:25	158:14 184:9	140:14 146:24	mario 168:10
153:17 161:11	266:12	187:24 227:8	161:23 242:1	mark 48:20,23 49:3
164:1 196:4	louisiana 210:21	248:18 262:5	248:2	49:21,24 50:3
231:13,24 239:7	louisville 6:4	malm 22:8,9 56:19	manuals 140:8	59:14 70:12 90:18
looks 70:11 170:15	195:22,23	168:16,19,21	manufacture	91:10 172:18,23
204:2 219:6	low 67:9 187:20	169:4,10 173:23	150:22 182:4	173:5 197:10
221:15 222:25	234:2,3 253:19	218:4	manufactured 8:10	198:10 201:4
223:21 224:21	lower 31:21 117:19	malms 173:24	26:1 29:20 65:9	205:22 206:6
241:14 244:16	lowes 191:8,14,14	175:15	104:3 144:24	218:23 220:22
252:10 262:21	191:21,25 192:13	malnar 261:14	145:20,23 151:6	marked 47:21 48:1
265:23	lowest 31:14	manage 51:9 56:12	151:13 162:9	59:18,21 107:14
<b>loop</b> 49:8	lowlead 187:15,22	management 21:14	165:1 257:13	130:15 136:22
lori 213:4 217:24	188:1	82:25 84:1 163:1	manufacturer	150:2 153:14
los 201:17,24 202:5	lunch 123:5,14	174:4,14	18:12 36:13 41:24	163:23 167:9,13
202:9,11,19 206:6	lyondell 132:8	manager 13:11,18	99:6 107:5 134:2	171:7,15 197:9,14
206:16,22 207:9		14:2,7,8,12,20,21	198:9 234:18	199:19,23 201:3,5
lose 76:18 77:3,21	M	15:1,2,11 16:12	242:24 245:14	201:7 203:6,7
78:15 79:1 231:12	<b>m</b> 3:4 6:6 273:14	17:1 19:1,3,12,16	manufacturers	204:10 205:14,20
262:7	magistrate 1:14	19:20,22 20:4,18	57:11 98:6 147:8	207:13,21 212:3
losing 17:23 39:3	mail 203:11 221:10	20:19 21:19 22:6	148:18 245:15,21	216:11,16 218:8
46:3 76:21 77:12	222:4 259:16	22:18,21,23 24:1	250:12,15 261:14	218:14 220:23,24
78:3	261:1	24:8,9,14 36:15	manufacturing	222:1,5,18,19
<b>lost</b> 76:12 174:24	<b>mailing</b> 240:8,11	37:9,13 45:14	15:5 16:14 20:8	224:20 225:1
<b>lot</b> 33:24 40:20 49:6	main 32:5 46:11	51:15 54:23 56:10	20:10,14 21:2	229:7,13 236:23
52:13 61:25 67:14	125:25,25 159:20	58:15 66:14 71:18	27:22 29:4,17,23	238:20 239:16,22
67:17 85:17 86:4	177:3,22 191:4	71:23 73:21 76:6	30:5 34:15 40:25	244:1,9 249:18,25
90:14 92:19,23	266:22	76:16 80:19 81:23	42:17,23 63:12	255:23 256:21,23
100:4 102:7	maintain 61:15	82:16,21 83:9,13	73:2 80:11 83:2	259:11,14 260:24
109:18 117:10	62:5 68:18 82:6	83:14,15,16,20	83:14 95:5,5,6	261:4 262:24
118:19 121:17	89:15 91:20,22	85:16 95:8 99:13	96:3,7 99:19,21	263:5 264:18,24
126:8 128:10	maintained 123:22	108:13 135:25	103:14,18 107:3	265:11,15 267:8
137:19 141:21,25	209:9	137:6,7 155:22	116:9,20 117:16	market 17:10,13,14
142:9,13,15 144:4	maintaining 68:22	157:21 160:22	117:24 156:10	17:23 30:7 37:10
152:21,23 155:17	92:10 123:18	167:12 168:11	168:7 173:20	44:6 61:13 82:24
155:17 157:23,25	124:5	171:4 172:1,12	177:3 185:7	87:10 92:10,14
159:16,16,22,23	maintains 124:16	190:13,16,24	190:17 204:2	99:3 124:6,15
178:4,7 179:6,19	maintenance 84:20	191:1,7 194:23	234:21 241:11	202:15
184:13 189:20	123:16	199:14 209:11	map 141:20 159:3	marketdriven 44:8
191:23 192:15,24	<b>major</b> 12:5 74:13	213:19,20 220:5	185:13 234:1	marketing 14:7,8
198:10 203:25	178:16 219:5	250:3	marc 172:12	14:12,19 20:7
208:12 209:3	245:4	managers 16:2	march 5:7 48:2	26:22 37:6,8 61:8
210:5,6,15 211:18	majority 253:1,8	83:3 160:13	50:22 137:1	61:11 107:24
212:17 214:10,22	making 33:12	173:17	139:25 205:22	160:11 173:20
216:25 242:17	40:22 43:18,22	managing 224:9	218:11 259:16	195:24 210:9
245:13,14 246:3,3	54:14,15 78:22	manifold 206:13,13	margin 60:20	211:19 218:23
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>



226:10 240:18	meadow 1:15 2:15	94:10 96:14,14	174:14 184:2	216:2 254:2
242:6 260:13	4:23 166:24 167:9	103:21 104:11,21	231:22 266:18	metallurgist 185:19
marketings 211:11	167:13 170:14	103.21 104.11,21	meetings 36:9,10	185:23,25 236:18
marketplace 31:15	171:7,15 173:10	104.23 103.13	36:10 51:19 72:12	method 27:16,19
31:20 60:25 87:20	194:19,23 197:9	112:10 115:14	79:14,17 82:17,20	28:1,6,9 72:16
93:19	197:14,21 199:20	122:14 126:9	83:8,10,12,23	214:20
markets 70:17	199:23 201:5,7	127:2 135:24	84:2,4,18 90:25	methods 98:21
marry 198:2,4	205:14,16,17,21	139:11 141:6,19	170:3 174:5	metro 159:15
marshall 180:5,7	207:14,21 212:3	142:11,12 154:16	meets 34:3 54:19	michael 1:3 2:4
martin 24:17 37:14	213:1 216:11,16	155:16 156:2,18	138:2,8,18 207:4	michelle 171:20
37:18 169:24	218:9,14 220:23	156:22 158:22	238:6 241:17	
170:2 176:1	220:25 222:2,5,17		member 183:24	microscope 106:10
martins 175:21	220.23 222.2,3,17 222:18,20 224:20	163:3,15 169:14 174:21 175:25	memo 63:9 81:2	microscopes 185:21
	· ·	174:21 173:23	218:12	middle 1:12 202:21
mason 21:4,5 42:16	225:1 229:7,13 232:12 235:16			
169:7 218:23		198:25 202:24	memorialized	226:17 238:21
mast 171:20	238:20 239:17,22 242:21 244:1,9	205:11 219:18 223:8 224:25	90:22 93:23	midwest 268:25 269:1
masters 11:18,21			memory 23:10 189:18 244:15	
12:14 13:22 14:4 14:5	249:19,25 251:11	236:7 246:25		miles 148:24
matchek 83:14	255:23 256:21,24	249:4,11 252:16 258:23 260:12	menards 38:1,4,7	<b>million</b> 62:13 189:8 189:13,16 197:4,6
	259:14 260:24		191:1,12,21	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
material 27:23	261:4 262:25	268:17 273:2	261:12,16 262:1,5	197:7 220:1 247:9
33:13 52:6 106:9	263:5 264:3,18,24	means 104:22	mention 88:13	253:2,5,7,8
128:17 132:8	265:12,15 266:10	148:11 188:1	90:23 206:24	millions 62:14
144:23 145:15	meadows 167:15	223:7 254:1 264:8	mentioned 8:21 66:22 89:24 91:20	mind 51:12
146:5 154:5 223:6 223:17,20 228:12	171:7 199:22 203:7 204:10	meant 166:13 202:7 219:4		minimal 108:19 117:2
228:16,18		measure 13:3 67:19	96:19 97:1,3 100:12 101:6	minimum 60:18,21
materials 104:20	205:23 207:15,17 213:2 216:12	111:16,25 260:10	103:12 101:6	61:20 126:20,22
228:21	218:10 222:21		111:1,23 116:25	
matt 213:18 261:11	224:21 233:18	measuring 67:18 mechanical 177:6	142:21 164:18	127:2,3,5,12 138:8 139:1
matter 7:16 152:16	234:23 236:23	177:10	180:4,12 210:10	239:10 257:22
165:6,9 274:8	239:18 244:2,22	mechanism 115:22	211:25 233:5	262:20
matters 49:10	249:21 256:24	193:14	245:20 251:2	minnesota 173:18
51:20 66:5 84:25	260:25 263:1	mechanisms 122:1	mentioning 206:16	
85:8	264:19 265:12	242:8	mentions 48:17	198:5,6,7,15 199:6,7 225:19
matured 135:20	mean 28:3 31:1,19	medders 1:3,4 2:5	merged 39:8	minute 47:23
mcactee 257:2	40:18 41:18 42:16	2:5	message 193:24	189:12 221:20
mccoy 1:4 2:6 4:16	47:6 53:3,9,14,25	meet 35:7 55:12	met 33:14,18 66:19	mis 98:8
4:21 81:2,7	54:1,2,14 55:9,20	60:18 61:20 79:12	82:25 103:7,13,14	mischaracterizing
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	56:12 57:22 58:10			181:6
107:21 108:11	59:4 63:19 69:24	82:23,24 84:12	103:25 104:19,19	
164:19 200:23	70:6,13 73:12	103:17 104:6 105:4 138:18	139:14 168:23 183:20 188:6	misinstallation 118:20
213:4 221:1	1			
234:13,20 244:5	76:17,22 77:4,12	meeting 13:4 54:5	235:1 239:10	mississippi 210:21 missouri 3:7 168:9
mclaughlin 1:16 2:16	81:23,25 84:20	79:2,5 83:1,16	metal 120:25 121:1	
	86:22 88:1 89:6	85:1 125:12	121:4 179:18	232:14 mistako 184:11
mcmahon 1:3 2:4	90:9 91:3 93:25	138:21 169:18	213:23 215:12	mistake 184:11



mistakes 111:12	
mitigate 217:15	
mobile 212:5,11	
232:15,19,22	
233:5,8,9,10	
mode 100:24	
143:16	
modest 85:22	
molecular 72:20	
molecules 27:19,25	
28:2	l
moment 188:21	
243:15 272:19	
<b>money</b> 175:10 217:1 234:15	
monica 1:3 2:4	l
montague 2:19	
month 83:1 84:2	
168:23,24 169:15	
169:17,17,22	l
174:6 232:4	
<b>monthly</b> 118:7,8	l
169:10	l
months 87:3 217:2	
224:14 270:24	
<b>morning</b> 7:13,14,19	l
134:18 136:21	l
mornings 24:21	l
motivation 98:23	l
move 20:22 24:6,11	
43:16 241:2	
moved 73:6 122:24	
190:14 195:21	
moving 196:11	
226:17,24	
mrad 234:5	
mrk 250:10,11,13	
265:20	
mrk73 265:18	
multiple 57:12	
69:18 76:21 77:7	
77:11,17 91:22	
92:3,6 123:17,18	
123:23 124:5,10	
124:16,19 214:14	
245:15	
	<u> </u>

municipal 148:13
252:25 253:3
municipalities
141:23,25 142:1
159:24 248:16
249:2,15
murray 176:24
177:17

## N name 7:15,22 26:3 26:4,6 27:8 28:9 33:1 37:14 79:24 80:6 144:25 147:15 173:8 176:20 196:8 264:13 265:22 267:4 named 27:6 107:22 164:16 names 23:7,15 79:20,22 narrow 129:4 nashville 1:13 **nathans** 189:24 national 19:3,12,16 147:14 148:6 166:25 191:1,6 194:20 **native** 207:18 **natural** 40:20 158:9 **nature** 228:5 near 159:21 177:1 necessarily 23:10 58:13 77:12 196:4 243:17 necessary 58:19 126:17 221:16 230:23 neck 217:16 need 51:1,16 68:14 68:23 92:18 98:21 133:23 161:2 162:24,25 166:6 200:17 245:2

needed 39:15 44:7 51:4,25 62:5 75:18 87:21 92:12 93:20 109:4 132:4 135:6 158:15 171:4 172:8 182:9 193:1 231:8 268:4 needs 57:2 93:1 206:16 245:6 negatively 58:4 nelson 218:19,20 net 2:24 never 35:16 42:18 55:10 58:1 63:6 70:9 76:23 81:5 116:14 119:21
120:4 147:5 157:9 193:5 196:23 236:4 241:24
245:19 264:12
nevertheless 106:15
new 1:1 14:13,14
20:6 39:2,2 66:2,8
87:15,17 98:17
109:1 111:1,2
171:3 182:9 190:5
211:15 221:25
226:24 248:3
250:5 259:25
260:8
newer 265:6
newness 64:18
65:19 66:7
news 48:18
nextpure 26:7,8,9
31:9 197:1,2
234:4
<b>nibco</b> 1:7,19 3:3
5:10,18,19 7:16 8:5,10,21,25 9:11
10:6,8 15:8,9,22
15:25 16:13,14,17
16:22 17:6,15,25
18:3,24 19:4,21
21:9,16 22:12
,

24:2,10 25:25
28:16,19 29:3,3
29:10,17,20,23
30:5 31:7,7,23
33:3,19,21,25
34:4,13 35:8,21
36:19,23 37:16
38:7,9,20 39:6,8
39:12,16,19 40:2
40:11 41:5 42:3
42:13,22 43:6,8
43:19 44:10,12
45:25 46:9 48:8
51:3 52:24 53:2
53:21,24 54:4,7,9
57:16 58:1 59:9
61:20 63:11,25
64:8 70:23 72:2
72:23 73:17,17
76:3,11 77:1,19
78:2,24 79:9 80:9
90.0 17 91.2 10
80:9,17 81:3,10
81:15,24 85:9
86:3,5,8,14,20
88:4 89:14 91:22
92:12 94:12,22
95:3 96:12 98:24
99:17 100:21
101:13 102:11,19
105:9,18,20
106:13,19 107:8
107:25 109:9
110.10.16.111.2
110:10,16 111:2
112:3,12 113:12
113:24 114:17,18
116:25 117:2
118:1 119:1,7,12
120:7,8,13 121:14
121:25 123:17,19
124:4,16 125:9,19
126:1 128:2,5,8
128:21 131:1,15
133:9 134:5
135:21 136:6
138:2,7 139:21,25
140:8 141:2
170.0 141.4

143:22 144:2,7,9
144:24 145:23
146:4 148:4
151:11,13,17
* *
152:20 153:6,22
154:16 155:25
156:13 158:21
160:10,19 161:3
161:16,18 162:18
162:22 163:13
165:1,24 167:6
169:24 171:3,12
171:20 173:2,3,14
176:9,15 182:1
183:2,2,14 184:22
185:1,3 186:1,22
188:3,14,15 189:2
189:22 190:2
191:10,13,25
193:16 194:21
195:18,20 196:15
196:20,22 198:3
198:14 199:10
202:23 204:13,17
205:11 207:1,6
210:2,13,15,24
211:12,21 212:6
220:8,18 223:10
223:11 227:3,5,17
227:22 228:2,4
229:12 230:18
231:15 233:1,13
234:13 239:19
241:2 243:2 244:5
244:17,22,25
245:7,9 246:20
247:3,7,11,13,22
247:23,25 251:20
253:11 254:25
256:7,16 257:1,15
257:17,19 258:16
258:17 259:6,6
260:10 261:13
264:10 265:7
266:8,15 267:5
269:24 270:1,13



	1
272:23,25 273:9	195:7,12 248:8
nibcos 30:23 53:18	<b>noticed</b> 180:19
57:15 70:9 74:10	notices 195:6,10
	,
85:10 90:16 94:8	noticing 111:12
102:17 103:12	november 167:2
116:23 120:9	197:11 252:3
124:5 126:25	nowadays 168:5
140:14 141:17	nows 123:8
148:5 153:16	nrt 48:14
167:1 192:13	nsf 48:14,19,20,2
196:24 219:13,21	
	49:3,11,20,24,2
219:23 225:10	50:3 53:4,25 54
234:18,21 236:14	54:3 55:3,10
241:22 248:8	58:14 60:17 62
258:1 259:7	63:20,21 68:24
260:17 262:7	70:15 78:15 79
266:8	80:10 81:3 92:4
nibso 160:8	124:1 138:7,15
nice 209:11	138:21 139:12
night 160:4	nsfs 34:18
<b>nightmare</b> 206:23	number 27:1 38
209:16	39:24 40:4 44:
<b>nobodys</b> 212:14	45:7,9,20,22 4
nodding 11:1	50:2 53:4 77:1
non 155:5	85:14 86:5 94:
<b>nonpex</b> 91:23	94:25 95:1 99:
nontechnical 59:6	109:21 118:10
normal 56:5	119:20,21 131:
normally 174:10	131:24 132:18
204:19 253:21	137:24 139:18
north 144:1 145:17	140:24 146:8
146:2 149:7	156:12 178:13
158:18 159:13	181:8 199:13
242:24	209:5,16 216:1
northeast 160:12	216:22 220:9
notable 141:17	222:4,20 224:2
158:17 159:9	233:19 236:12
notably 149:4	247:19 251:19
161:4	256:25 259:8
<b>notary</b> 6:8 274:23	262:25 269:25
<b>noted</b> 60:17	270:14,20
notes 25:10 139:19	numbered 137:2
166:17 222:22,23	numbers 45:5,8
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
_ :	
	l '
100:9 194:13	197:11 205:23
223:14 <b>notice</b> 63:5 161:8 166:9 194:13	113:8 171:8 184:19 192:2 197:11 205:2

105.7 12 240.0
195:7,12 248:8
noticed 180:19
notices 195:6,10
noticing 111:12
november 167:24
197:11 252:3
nowadays 168:5
nows 123:8
<b>nrt</b> 48:14
nsf 48:14,19,20,23
49:3,11,20,24,25
50:3 53:4,25 54:1
54:3 55:3,10
58:14 60:17 62:20
63:20,21 68:24
70:15 78:15 79:1
80:10 81:3 92:4
124:1 138:7,15,17
138:21 139:12
nsfs 34:18
number 27:1 38:16
39:24 40:4 44:22
45:7,9,20,22 48:3
50:2 53:4 77:13
85:14 86:5 94:22
94:25 95:1 99:20
109:21 118:10
119:20,21 131:21
131:24 132:18
137:24 132:18
140:24 146:8
156:12 178:13
181:8 199:13
209:5,16 216:12
216:22 220:9
222:4,20 224:21
233:19 236:12
247:19 251:19
256:25 259:8
262:25 269:25
270:14,20
numbered 137:24
<b>numbers</b> 45:5,8
113:8 171:8
184:19 192:25,25
107 11 205 22

7453	
207:15,17 213:1 214:22 218:9 221:2 222:2 229:7 239:18 244:1 249:20 260:25	ob ob ob
264:19 265:12 270:25 <b>numeric</b> 181:7	1 1 <b>ob</b>
	4
object 29:6 33:4 34:16 35:24 36:5 39:10 41:10 42:8 50:1,10 51:6 53:8 54:10 55:8,18 56:22 58:24 61:3 61:22 62:11 63:18 64:14 65:21,25 66:16 69:15 71:15 72:10 73:24 74:19 76:9 80:20 84:19 89:17 92:15 99:22 103:20 104:9,17 107:11 111:16	66 11 10 000 000 11 11 000 47 77 11 11 11
115:24 129:20 136:10 138:12	2
139:5,9 145:1,22 145:25 151:16 152:1 153:9	000 000 7
155:13 162:19 163:14 166:1 186:3 188:5 189:4 193:18 194:1,16	1 oct
198:24 229:4 230:13 231:18 232:8,20 234:24 237:22 238:8,14	1 2 <b>od</b> <b>off</b>
243:21 245:10 246:22 247:6,16 248:10 253:13,23 254:16 255:8	off off off
262:14 266:11 272:4	1 off

observed 159:12
<b>obtain</b> 111:2
<b>obtained</b> 64:6,17
87:16
obvious 105:25
106:7 118:20
156:17
obviously 24:23
43:24 46:17 61:16
69:24 77:5 119:25
120:6 154:16
182:8 238:18
occasion 170:1
occasionally 167:3
occur 42:25 55:10 113:24 127:22
153:3 occurred 33:2 43:1
43:5 68:8 71:20
76:16 84:2 113:24
116:17,18 120:4
128:7,10,20
128.7,10,20
162:16 187:4
269:3
occurrence 215:23
occurring 75:4,13
75:15 82:5 112:24
144:8 162:8
occurs 114:12
128:2
october 4:17 5:5,6
5:13 131:4 171:10
171:12,18 201:8
203:11 256:25
od 201:22
offer 26:20,21 30:9
31:16,21
offered 12:16 196:2
<b>offering</b> 44:4 87:17
<b>office</b> 25:17 39:25
163:4
official 108:22
officially 190:11
<b>offshore</b> 180:10,11
<b>oh</b> 22:19 29:12

39:23 43:10 80:1 96:22 97:10 102:1 112:16 118:7 127:19 147:15 150:6 164:7 166:12,15 172:4 179:17 180:7 181:21 186:9,13 190:23 192:4 196:23 212:25 214:22 236:8,25 241:20 273:10 ohio 41:1 72:25 173:6 okay 7:17,20,24 8:4 8:12,16,24 9:10 9:18,24 10:12,19 10:24 11:3,4,6,9 11:10,15,16,20 12:1,12,23 13:5 13:13,15,18,21 14:8,25 15:4,10 16:6,17,20 17:25 18:11,16,22,25 19:5,22 21:1,5,20 22:9,23 23:9,24 24:3,23 25:13,15 25:18,24 26:14 28:5 29:10,15,20 30:1 31:2,16,23 32:14 33:7,21 34:8,24 35:21 36:14,19,22 37:7 37:15,21 38:4,17 39:8 40:5,14,24 41:5,12 42:4,12 43:3,19 44:17,19 44:25 45:3,13,20 45:23 46:21 47:4 47:19,25 48:9,13 48:17 49:2 50:20 52:9 53:1,6 54:22 56:3 59:14,17,19 59:25 60:5 63:2 63:16,23 64:20,23 65:8,13 67:20



objection 194:3

obligation 144:20

266:16

133:1 136:23,24 137:14,23 139:16 140:24 144:1,7 145:10 147:21 148:3,10 150:13 153:1,2,12,15,25 154:21 156:21	137:14,23 139:16 140:24 144:1,7 145:10 147:21 148:3,10 150:13 153:1,2,12,15,25 154:21 156:21 157:10 158:16 163:21 164:7,13 164:18 166:16,18 166:20 167:8	137:14,23 139:16 140:24 144:1,7 145:10 147:21 148:3,10 150:13 153:1,2,12,15,25 154:21 156:21 157:10 158:16 163:21 164:7,13 164:18 166:16,18 166:20 167:8 168:1,8,15,18 169:2,9,23 170:1 170:8,14,18,21 173:10,22 176:12	137:14,23 139:16 140:24 144:1,7 145:10 147:21 148:3,10 150:13 153:1,2,12,15,25 154:21 156:21 157:10 158:16 163:21 164:7,13 164:18 166:16,18 166:20 167:8 168:1,8,15,18 169:2,9,23 170:1 170:8,14,18,21
	163:21 164:7,13 164:18 166:16,18 166:20 167:8	163:21 164:7,13 164:18 166:16,18 166:20 167:8 168:1,8,15,18 169:2,9,23 170:1 170:8,14,18,21 173:10,22 176:12	163:21 164:7,13 164:18 166:16,18 166:20 167:8 168:1,8,15,18 169:2,9,23 170:1 170:8,14,18,21 173:10,22 176:12 177:4,15,20 179:12 180:4 182:23 186:19,20 186:25,25 188:3 189:22 191:10

195:15,17,20
196:6,8,10,21
197:8,15,16,20
198:16,18,22
199:10,19 200:2,3
200:6,24 201:3,12
201:13 202:20
203:13,15,19
204:4 206:3,4,24
207:5,22,23 208:7
208:20 212:24
213:7 214:6 216:4
216:7 217:11
218:3,15,16
219:12 220:15,22
221:6 223:3,5,9
224:2,20 225:3,9
225:16,21,23
226:5 227:3,12,18
227:21 228:1,17
229:2,6,14,15,18
231:15 232:24
236:13,25 237:3,7
237:11,20 238:24
239:16,24 240:7
241:10 242:21
243:4,17,25
244:10,11,15,20
246:5 247:1,21
248:4,7 249:18
250:2 251:22,23
252:2 254:22
256:4,5 257:5,9
257:16,25 258:10
258:15,22 259:21
259:22,24 260:7
261:5,6,9 262:3
263:7,9,14,18
264:2,9,17 265:6
265:19 266:7,23
267:10 268:9
269:11,23 270:8
272:8,13 273:11
273:12
oklahoma 8:15
once 33:16 43:4,5,7

7454
83:1 84:2 93:18
93:18 168:23,24 174:6 178:23
191:16 230:19
243:18 247:22
oneeighth 179:5
oneonone 93:4
onepage 216:11
222:20 224:24 256:24 262:25
ones 125:13 159:7
180:12 209:22
212:23 242:18
246:2 271:21
272:2,2,2
ongoing 10:8
online 34:18
onsite 101:21 106:18
opened 164:15
opening 202:2
operate 148:22
operating 5:16
55:15 148:8
168:22 169:2,18
170:6,9,15 173:23
174:2 190:3
222:23 264:21 <b>operation</b> 28:4
56:13 163:6
168:20 172:22
190:17 226:12
operations 21:2,21
39:17 148:13
172:12,19 242:14
242:14
opinion 234:19
<b>opportunities</b> 70:21 84:11,17
opportunity 47:18
192:5 195:23,25
opposed 36:24
option 48:19 49:20
131:6 132:22
133:14 240:15
options 132:5,9,14

132:14,20
orange 60:18 64:12
64:17 65:10,15
66:12 72:8 84:16
138:11 139:8
order 35:7 54:25,25
57:1 92:13 119:11
144:12 229:21
248:19 252:25
organic 109:13
organization 4:24
4:25 20:20 152:21
167:6,11 171:8,13
172:11 173:13
211:10 241:14
organized 209:12
original 60:16
77:21 93:16
157:20 210:25
originally 32:21
orlando 168:10
ought 75:4 121:21
130:7 135:11
231:21
outcome 10:4
105:19
outfit 163:3
outlets 191:11
outside 119:2 124:3
177:9 201:22
210:16 231:12
232:2,4 235:3
241:20
outsource 206:17
outstanding 208:16
269:21
oven 271:12
overall 30:23 86:3 overbent 106:1
129:2
overchlorinate
142:7
overkill 134:19
142:1
174.1

oversaw 20:5

overseeing 21:1,21

oversight 20:24 161:2 owens 164:16 165:8 165:23 166:11 **owned** 163:15 owner 258:3 ownership 38:25 **owning** 39:2 **oxidated** 9:18,23 106:4 115:20,21 116:1,8 oxidating 102:22 oxidative 116:18 118:18 143:25 229:22 230:12,21 232:25 234:22 oxidativetype 115:16 128:23 129:5 232:16 235:7 P **p** 2:19 137:18 273:14 **pad** 114:24 page 4:2,11 60:8,14 63:24 64:3,4,23 64:24 68:2,17 74:7 75:22,22,23 88:25 131:7 137:23 139:17 164:6 171:14 202:20,21 206:25 210:8 213:3 214:6 232:11,12 233:12 234:12 235:15 240:23 241:10 242:23 244:22 252:2,23 274:6 pages 251:19 252:8 paid 216:24 217:17 218:22 220:7 221:15,17 223:21 250:15 **paint** 173:7 paper 209:6



<b>papers</b> 91:13	
paperwork 210:2	
paragraph 48:17	
50:14,23 60:15	p
68:3,5,7 138:1	
154:1 198:18	p
206:16,24 233:17	
235:5 242:22	
parallel 211:11	p
<b>parameters</b> 241:5 254:25	
pareto 118:9	m
parse 100:13	p
part 24:10 40:18	
49:2,8 58:19	p
61:11,17 71:4	r
73:9,12 74:25	p
78:14 82:7 86:6	•
88:13 90:18 93:2	p
110:2 112:11	p
129:22,23 139:6	p
146:9 152:21	
162:22 170:24	p
171:5 176:4,7	p
184:22 187:17	
188:4 189:8,12,13 213:5 218:20	p
230:16 240:18,19	
241:24 247:7	
253:8,21 265:2,7	
269:24	p
participant 244:4	p
participated 192:2	•
participating 244:3	p
particular 59:2	p
69:12 93:15 97:17	p
104:6 118:23	p
128:3,6,21 132:24	
138:20 148:11	
158:22 166:7	
181:11 200:17,24	
208:10 209:3,10	
210:5 211:7 213:11 214:1	
222:24 239:8	
particularly 51:10	
particularly 51.10	

66:13 141:11
146:11 171:13
208:11
partner 33:16
211:6
parts 13:3 158:19
189:16 212:12
253:2,5,6 268:24
party 54:8 57:3,18
58:7 60:24 66:18
70:8
<b>pass</b> 53:22 55:5 61:9 67:12 69:14
234:5
passed 50:11 53:25
187:15,20
passing 89:19
203:5
pat 172:25 173:8
pause 247:14
pay 12:16 182:6
214:2 222:13
payable 224:1
paying 157:6 182:6
208:20 235:2
payment 155:25
156:14,25 209:18 213:21 214:3
217:20 222:14
270:16
<b>peculiar</b> 168:9
pending 11:13
195:7 198:22
penetrate 70:17
penetration 17:14
pennsylvania 2:21
people 22:17,19
23:3,7 39:1,14,25
43:18 46:19 48:3 52:3 53:16 58:23
59:3,6,6,8 66:5
67:13,13,16,16
70:10,18 71:16,17
71:20 72:1,1,6,7
79:11 81:25 82:2
00 10 01 00 00 0

82:13,21,22 83:2

83:8 84:3,9,12 90:14 92:22 93:17 95:25 96:15 114:2 114:22 121:3,18 121:21 122:17 125:16 128:17 133:24 135:16 137:8 143:2 146:18 152:10,18 156:18 157:7 163:4,5,19 166:4 168:1 172:10 178:2 179:19 182:19 184:8 185:1,10 187:8 190:5 193:15 198:12 200:16 204:13 216:22,25 222:4 226:11 233:14 234:13 235:11,16 236:18 238:17 239:15 242:6 246:19,23 246:24 247:2 248:7,17 252:3 256:13 258:7 273:3  peoples 166:6 182:17
<b>peperno</b> 1:4,4 2:5,6 <b>perceived</b> 247:25
percent 31:5 46:5
85:13,14,19,20
86:5 113:2 126:21 127:4,6,8 131:23
131:23 132:4,13
134:13,15,16
135:1,7,11,12,14 135:18,23 136:7
136:17 140:6,19
177:12 181:10
188:2 199:3 219:20,21 236:12
242:24 270:15
percentage 31:3
99:17 102:9,10

110:15,17 155:24 156:4
perception 46:20
46:21
perfect 179:22
perfectly 179:2
perform 4:18 33:21
110:10,16 157:19
255:4
performance 46:8
136:25 139:20,23
141:1
performed 35:7
67:6 69:2 72:22
101:25 105:7
204:14
performing 52:23
53:2 68:25 73:22
172:1 174:12
period 30:20 42:4
45:10 62:14 82:4
85:21,22 86:2
98:19 105:12
111:8 145:14,17
149:16 151:20
165:15 171:12,18
189:24 198:23
258:11
periodically 49:7
81:25
permitted 154:3
<b>peroxide</b> 27:16,16
perpetuate 202:7
pers 99:15 102:10
110:14,15 112:20
112:23 113:11
118:2,10,14 119:6
155:23,25
person 21:21,24
22:5 72:19 83:23
103:9 121:25
122:5 158:6,10
160:23 200:20 207:14 244:16,17
personal 154:6
264:3,9
404.3,7

personally 36:3 91:5 93:8 184:7 personnel 79:10 81:17 244:25 **pex** 4:14 8:9,13,21 9:11 13:6 14:15 15:7,23 16:8,10 16:25 17:6,9,9,10 17:13,23 18:1,10 19:7,20,23 20:4,6 20:7,19,21,23 21:2 22:1,6,18 24:4,14 25:25 28:5,11,12,13 29:4,12 30:16,25 31:2 32:12,18 33:13,15,22 36:7 36:11,15 45:14 51:15 54:23,25 56:10,11 58:15 60:10 64:9 66:14 73:21 76:4,6,7,13 78:3 80:19 82:16 85:10 88:11 90:7 91:22 95:8,9 98:1 98:16 99:13,15,16 100:5,5 102:10 109:1 110:9,15 112:21 114:11,23 115:17 118:4,6,14 118:17 119:9 120:7,13,19,22,23 121:1,5,19,22 122:1,25 123:19 124:3 126:22 132:20 135:16 137:13 141:1 143:11 144:19 147:5 148:15,22 150:12 151:17 155:23,24 158:9 160:8,11,13,15 167:1,6,12,22 168:10,20 170:15 170:22 172:19 173:16,24 174:11



	I	I	I	I
174:20 176:2,4,10	57:15 65:8 72:16	148:21	<b>plays</b> 186:15	239:25 240:20
177:6 179:17,24	73:10,18,23 74:18	<b>piping</b> 19:20	<b>please</b> 7:4 47:23	247:21 258:13
183:6 184:23	98:24 99:2,5	148:22 230:17	164:11 195:9	pointing 65:5
185:4 187:1,7	103:16 105:10	245:22 254:25	245:5	points 5:12 68:10
188:4 190:20,21	125:22 126:17	255:1 258:5,17	<b>plisko</b> 1:15 2:16	68:13 75:24,25
190:24 191:24	127:18 131:7	<b>place</b> 91:4 94:12	<b>plumber</b> 117:12	137:24 249:22
192:13 193:14,15	132:9 134:3	123:3 129:3 149:3	120:8	250:4,21
194:21 196:25	140:11 259:17	163:20 242:1	<b>plumbers</b> 32:2,11	<b>policy</b> 78:19 258:10
201:21,23 202:8	<b>ph</b> 141:8 142:22,24	273:1 274:6	92:20 93:4 94:2	259:3 273:9
205:1,24 206:5	143:5,20 189:1	placed 100:8	98:20 100:10	political 12:5
211:16,17 212:6	philadelphia 2:21	<b>places</b> 158:24	111:12 128:14	<b>poll</b> 92:17
212:15 213:20	physically 46:22	placing 140:15	177:24 193:10,17	polling 93:2
225:8,10 227:5	pictures 245:1	<b>plains</b> 225:19	208:13 209:21	<b>poly</b> 199:2,15,17
229:21 230:17	piece 86:2 95:2	<b>plaintiff</b> 9:10,14	<b>plumbing</b> 5:18 8:25	214:1
231:11 235:6,9	100:20 102:6	<b>plaintiffs</b> 1:5,17 2:3	18:6,14 27:8	polyethylene 27:17
236:14 238:12	105:25 112:15	2:15 7:16 48:1	32:15 34:1 93:6	27:20 28:3
240:6 241:22	114:4,23,24 115:1	166:24	98:18 110:24	polymer 122:4
242:23 245:12,21	128:19 129:8	<b>plan</b> 26:22 184:6	136:6 142:4	popular 177:14
245:22 246:6,24	130:6 137:12	planned 196:4	147:20,24,25	199:18 202:1
247:3 250:8	240:20 258:3	planning 132:10	150:11 151:10	population 159:17
251:15 253:15	pile 85:3	plant 14:21,25 15:2	158:2,4 182:16	159:23
254:4 263:12	<b>pipe</b> 4:14 26:9	15:4,11 20:9,18	201:18 203:21	portable 138:3
269:1	36:10 49:13 50:24	20:19,23,25 22:20	208:18 209:4	189:8
pexa 27:14,15	60:10 63:2,11,14	39:25 63:4 82:21	225:4 227:1	<b>portion</b> 85:10
31:12 73:10	63:17 64:9 65:10	82:23 120:16	257:14 262:21	position 76:3 115:3
pexb 27:14,19 28:7	65:15 66:12 72:8	121:4 133:8	266:8	157:6,18 167:6
28:15,16,19,22	72:16 74:14,14,17	158:13 172:5,19	pocket 268:3	179:1 192:10
29:3,8,13,17,21	74:18 75:10,11	184:9 190:12	pockets 269:2	211:11 258:24
29:24 30:6,8,11	76:4 77:8 79:13	225:6,7 226:5,10	point 13:21 15:5	possible 54:17
30:14,17,18,24	80:10 81:3,13	226:19 241:17	16:11 18:19 20:13	58:17 109:22
31:4,12,17,24	82:6 84:16 86:15	242:16 243:14,24	20:17 21:11 24:6	116:10 117:5,13
32:1 73:10 132:6	86:20,21 87:1,6	253:2,4,7,9	24:14 28:16 29:5	117:14 128:14
134:2	87:10,11 88:11	plastic 13:3 15:6	35:21 36:3,16	possibly 219:22
pexc 27:10,14,25	90:7,23 92:9 95:2	16:12,14,22,24	41:23 42:1,22	post2010 248:5
29:7,11,13 30:3	96:24 100:16	36:10 53:15 79:13	48:24 53:1 54:3	potential 32:18
30:11,24,25 31:3	103:13 104:2,6	90:7,23 92:6	55:16 63:23 67:9	35:22 74:13 75:16
31:6,8,11,24,25	112:15 125:4	124:8 129:9	67:9 69:3 83:20	96:13
32:7,11 34:5,14	135:5,22 136:8	179:21 199:2,8,11	88:17,25 97:5	potentially 31:14
35:7,13,22 36:4	138:11 139:8,25	200:18 206:12	99:24 109:9	131:13
36:16 37:19 38:7	140:15 143:14	plastics 12:19,21	113:18 120:20	pounds 255:10,11
38:9,14 40:12,16	162:9 194:14	13:10 14:6,21	121:5,20 131:16	power 213:18
40:25 41:9,21	204:17,18,21	15:15,18,20,22	131:25 135:21	powerpoint 169:1
42:22 43:4 44:11	233:2 247:15,24	24:2,3,8,10 92:3	136:1 140:14	169:19
45:18 48:14 51:4	248:9 254:12,13	121:4,22 123:22	163:13 186:1	pr 184:22
51:17 52:24 53:21	255:4,6,9,12	236:19	226:19 230:10	practical 163:11
54:7 56:20 57:2	pipes 139:21	playback 186:8,9	231:1 232:5	practically 57:7
3 30.20 37.2	F-P-00 107.21	Pag Sacri 100.0,		Practically 57.7



<b>practice</b> 110:20,22	100:15 148:16	86:22 87:3 88:7	75:2,6,8 76:22	75:10,16,17,20
126:14	161:5 249:14	89:4 95:15 99:7	85:5 94:16,19	76:4,13 78:4 83:3
preauthorized	254:10,13	102:14 109:15	95:9 98:13 104:22	89:1,10 92:11
217:22	pressurization	112:5,6 115:4,6	104:25 111:3	93:1 94:17,18
precise 236:9	116:2 148:10	120:5 121:9 127:4	119:2,8 122:23	95:4,24 96:1,8,11
prefer 30:11	pretty 21:17 57:23	134:14 135:11,13	125:23 126:2,4,6	96:16 98:2,4,16
preferred 30:13	99:25 115:12	136:3 137:7 145:8	127:21 128:1,2	98:17,22 103:8,16
prematurely 248:9	116:10 133:22	149:15 150:4	139:6 185:4	103:19 104:8,14
premus 83:9,19	147:15,21,25	156:5 157:2 161:6	193:20,22 203:3	104:15,22 107:6
107:21 112:15	163:2 195:25	163:4 180:7	206:11 209:2	108:1,3 118:21
118:3 122:2,20	207:8 211:4	184:20 188:25	219:3,9 226:24	119:13 120:19
158:11 204:12	216:20 222:11	189:12 190:10	260:1 272:25	121:2 122:3,5
229:9 231:25	236:20 240:16	191:4 193:22	processing 83:15	123:17,22 129:17
233:12,21 235:4	previous 10:14	197:3,4 209:24	165:24 172:21,24	131:11,19 132:5
prepare 24:20	61:4 174:3 255:13	210:5 211:5	271:10,15	132:23,25 133:2
prepared 169:19	previously 201:3,4	219:13 221:13	<b>produce</b> 28:12	133:18,20,22
preparing 25:11	201:7 203:5	225:13 242:17	169:9 237:24	134:1,24 140:21
present 170:19	224:22 226:21	261:24 268:1,2,25	produced 25:21	144:17,23 145:16
172:1	236:23 238:20	270:24 271:14	131:12 144:10	150:14,19,20,20
presentation 192:7	255:23 259:11,14	<b>problem</b> 47:14	146:3 177:18	150:21,22,23
preserve 195:4,9	price 31:17,21	94:24 109:14	178:21 206:14	151:1,4,13,25
president 21:13	192:16	178:25 180:16	238:5 251:20	154:12 155:12
22:11 195:24	<b>pricing</b> 13:11,12,18	181:24 182:2	256:7 257:15	156:17 157:1,21
208:5 218:22,24	14:2 26:22 31:18	192:18,19,20	268:1	158:14 160:7
pressure 33:24	primary 68:22 96:9	193:14 210:5	producing 28:11	161:21 172:25
98:4 100:1,13,18	print 41:14 48:20	215:9,10 232:19	64:8 199:15	173:21 180:21
100:21 101:2,5	49:4,21 55:4	233:16 234:1,7,22	253:10	182:8,9 183:23
106:6,6 109:23,24	222:25	245:3,4 246:21	<b>product</b> 8:18 14:13	190:24 193:25
111:4,5,7,9,10,24	<b>printed</b> 204:18,19	247:4 248:1 258:5	16:2,3,12 17:1	194:6 202:13
112:14 115:17	242:11 254:25	271:9	18:3 19:1 20:12	203:2 204:15,16
117:8 122:7 129:6	<b>prior</b> 33:12 41:18	problems 36:4	22:21,23 24:9	205:5 207:4 215:1
132:3 144:5,13,15	44:12 48:24 85:15	47:10,17 100:11	26:17,25 27:10,14	215:10,20 225:25
146:14,16,19,21	130:2 136:5,13	178:4,13 180:14	28:17,22 31:12,12	226:6,8 227:6,23
146:22 147:1,9	162:12 188:3	184:15 187:4	32:6 34:3,15	227:24 231:17,22
148:5,6,12,20	190:25 225:10	213:23 215:25	40:11,16,19 41:8	237:21 238:5
149:2,7,8,11,25	234:9,12 248:7	224:16 245:18	41:9 43:9,20	240:6,21 242:15
158:18,25 159:12	258:16 265:23	269:12	46:13 47:8,15,18	245:5 246:21
159:20 160:3	<b>private</b> 17:11 18:1	procedure 6:7	49:25 51:4,9,10	247:5,13 248:20
161:13,17,20,21	26:19 196:21	129:23 230:5,19	51:24 52:8,18	250:3 251:3
205:3,3,8 212:10	privileged 25:20	procedures 5:17	54:19 56:2 58:16	256:13 257:15
233:4 247:18,23	probably 10:13	242:16 264:21	58:17 60:16,23,24	259:4 260:1,3,8
248:9,14,18,24,25	22:19 24:11 28:14	proceed 51:21	62:2,6,8,9,18,24	261:20 262:7,12
249:5,17 251:3	31:5 37:21 38:18	237:13	63:1 65:9 66:19	262:19 267:17
255:1,10,11,14	39:23,24 52:11	proceedings 7:1	67:6,11 68:19,22	268:22 272:23
268:11,14,16,24	53:14 56:16,20	process 27:22	68:24 69:13,21	production 82:21
pressures 98:9	58:5 75:4 85:17	33:17 74:8,11	70:4,4 71:8 74:14	172:20 251:21
_	l	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	l



<b>products</b> 8:10,13
8:21 13:6,12
14:14,15 15:4,7,7
15:23 16:8,25
17:6 18:1,8 19:5
19:13,23 20:6,7
22:1,18 24:4
26:19,20,21 31:17
32:19 33:18,22
34:1 36:7,12,15
36:25 51:15 53:18
56:11 61:19,24
66:15 70:7,10,19
73:21 76:6,7 77:7
80:19 85:10 91:22
91:24 92:1,3,16
94:21 95:10 98:18
98:25 99:2,13,16
104:12,18 110:10
112:18,22 118:4,6
119:8 120:17
121:15 123:19,25
124:4,4,10,14,16
124:20 140:9
144:22 151:6,18
152:22 153:22
155:23 160:9
167:1,7 177:2
179:14 183:7
191:13,25 192:14
194:21 205:9
206:8 210:18
223:11 225:5,10
230:11 236:14
237:25 238:13
245:9 256:18
262:11
professionals
177:24 179:10,10
program 13:22,25
14:4,5 76:3 184:3
184:22
progress 43:18
79:18
project 26:8,16
35:12 36:23 37:2

44:13 46:10,23
47:1 51:2 61:6
75:1 79:15 80:4
81:18,21,22 82:6
82:10,15 88:14
125:22 131:10
175:3 190:25
259:18 260:1,5
projects 43:14 83:5
85:5
<b>promise</b> 250:20
promote 240:5
promoting 93:19
promotion 12:16
14:13
<b>promptly</b> 216:24
224:17
proper 98:21,21
properly 146:20
236:1 238:5
271:17
properties 63:1
231:13
<b>property</b> 151:12,25
153:3 154:7,13
155:9 156:1 157:6
182:17
proposal 125:15
175:10 234:14
protect 96:12
108:20 117:2
protecting 155:2
protection 146:20
151:7
protocol 52:4
183:14 184:25
185:9 236:16
protocols 52:21
67:7,17 90:13
proves 150:21
<b>provide</b> 34:13 35:3
76:4 113:13,14,25
116:23 155:25
provided 35:8
65:15 81:1 88:25
1.00.12

169:13

117:6 134:12
137:8 144:13
149:25 159:18
162:2,3 166:9
179:20 180:18
209:15 240:12
248:3 252:5
254:12 261:16,17
264:15
<b>puts</b> 149:2 250:20
<b>putting</b> 26:22 92:22
135:16 161:23
194:2
pyrometer 111:14
111:15,24 112:14
111.13,21112.11
0
qualified 157:18
qualities 111:22
quanties 111.22
quality 12:25 13:2
13:5,15 52:7
61:23 62:6,9,18
66:19,20 73:22
74:3 83:9,19
241:15,17,21
242:1,2,8 248:20
quebec 27:7
quell 252:5
<b>question</b> 10:21 11:8
11:12,13 22:4
35:25 55:17 67:3
68:2 90:5 99:17
103:21 112:11
115:25 116:16
119:18 130:17,22
163:8 183:1 186:7
204:8 244:20
254:17 261:18
265:17 268:13
270:9
questionnaire
93:11
questions 7:18
10:20,25 11:5
47:22 50:21 59:15
66:10 126:7 164:5
00:10 120:7 104:3

Page 2
166:20 167:2 251:1 252:13 267:6,12 268:4,9 269:4,7,9 272:14 <b>quick</b> 180:20 235:24 236:10 263:12 267:6 <b>quickly</b> 64:23 <b>quite</b> 187:5 <b>quotes</b> 166:9
R
radiant 28:23,23
29:14
radius 101:9,14
179:22 228:11,15
radiuses 228:21
raise 7:3
raised 247:22
raises 183:1
raising 261:19
randy 1:23 6:3 7:23
54:24 108:18
123:12 152:11
range 50:25 51:1
126:24 271:4
ranged 189:12
ranges 210:20
ranking 262:10
rare 99:25 116:10
215:23
rated 147:2 148:17
rating 132:16
148:18 256:1
261:20 262:6
ratings 92:21
raw 27:23 145:14
146:5
ray 1:3 2:4
reach 17:17 44:1
128:8
reaction 27:18,24
47:17,17 117:5
195:2 240:17
read 50:13 56:16
10au 20.12 20.10

78:16 109:21



	l	<u> </u>		
125:7 152:11	61:5 77:14,16	recirculation 44:3	214:4 222:13	106:17 147:12
155:9 164:12	108:19 131:18	44:5 45:1 46:5,8	recommending	185:24 209:1
186:6 245:3	recall 9:21 10:4	46:18 88:8,15	78:17 80:9 81:2	214:12 228:18
<b>readily</b> 34:22 73:11	18:6,11,16 28:5,8	89:3 92:20,22	135:21	232:4,9,16 233:14
103:10	33:7 34:8 35:4,4	131:22 134:6,11	record 7:22 10:21	233:16,24 234:7,8
reading 49:23	37:15,25 38:12,13	134:12,13,25	11:2 50:16,18	234:11 235:8
59:16 69:23 78:5	38:15,16,19 39:3	135:16,22,23	88:21,22 123:10	245:16 250:22
89:4 155:8 203:23	43:2 45:17 47:16	136:7 139:19,22	157:12 166:19	<b>refers</b> 198:19
readings 158:1	51:18 52:25 59:12	140:2,16,20	194:2,3 216:8	202:20 223:7,24
reads 140:19	73:20 74:1 76:20	194:10,14	221:19,23,25	238:10
221:20 252:24	76:21 79:19,22	recognize 158:22	251:6,9 267:1	reflect 182:1
255:9	80:5 81:16 86:13	167:10,17,18	274:10	reflected 197:21
<b>ready</b> 104:13	117:14 118:13	171:11 197:13,16	recorded 274:9	221:9
153:15 251:22	123:19 129:1	197:18 199:25	records 90:24	reformulate 42:22
real 134:3 163:3	130:25 140:18	200:3 201:10	172:7	43:20 51:17 52:2
really 35:10 45:11	142:9 149:7	203:12,16 206:1	recourse 166:7	87:19 88:5 131:7
45:20 46:21 61:12	175:24 181:12,18	207:23 213:5,8	recover 202:15	132:8
66:2,2 67:18	189:11 197:13	218:13 221:5	recovery 151:5,14	reformulated 43:4
79:12 83:22 92:20	207:19 209:10	222:8,9 224:24	151:24 154:13	45:18 51:5,25
97:4 101:4 113:1	213:11 214:25	225:2 229:15	155:11	reformulating 43:9
114:8 127:9 129:7	228:22 229:11,17	237:1,4 238:21,25	recross 4:7 272:16	46:15 92:9
133:23 136:15	233:11 237:7	239:20,23 244:7	red 60:18 63:11,14	reformulation
143:1 145:10,11	238:15 239:3	244:11 249:23	63:17 64:11,17	41:18 43:13 44:12
145:15 146:25	240:1 246:14	250:1 251:17,23	65:5,10,15 66:12	46:10,25 51:2
158:15 160:21	258:23	252:17 256:2,5	72:8 80:10 81:3	61:5 79:15 81:18
162:6,25 175:5	receive 11:20	259:3,19,22 261:2	84:15 138:10	81:22 82:5,13
180:3 188:7	received 11:17	263:3,6 264:22	139:7 217:9	88:14 125:21
226:14 229:22	34:21 60:6 114:16	recognized 74:13	redacted 213:6	131:10,13,19
230:1 238:15,15	118:10 195:10	recognizing 131:9	redress 273:6	145:3 175:3
240:3 245:13	197:9,17 200:1	recollection 48:10	reduced 274:9	259:17
246:14 249:16	205:21 232:3	78:1	reducing 69:8	reformulations
258:24 262:10	235:14 237:5	recommend 140:19	reel 116:13	104:21
reason 32:5 46:11	251:13,18 271:19	142:18 147:3	reem 265:21	refused 157:9
47:5 50:4 53:17	receiving 43:17	recommendation	reexamination 4:6	regarding 40:11,15
63:7,21 88:13	51:3 197:13 221:1	51:22 72:13 75:23	270:10	109:10 122:1
92:8 113:16	221:7 229:11	79:3,4 80:17	refer 83:23 141:3	125:4 155:9,11
116:12 126:9	recession 85:24	81:10 100:2	214:7	176:1 194:21
137:10 139:12	recipe 41:14 271:11	125:15 134:20	reference 248:22	regardless 97:1
174:25 177:22	recipient 229:9	147:3	referenced 63:16	113:8 116:23
191:19 210:4	236:24	recommendations	referred 96:20 97:3	118:17 126:22
230:25 232:24	recir 131:23,24	77:5 78:22 98:6	179:13 181:5	156:12
reasonable 149:1	132:5,13 135:11	126:13	203:4 217:12	region 160:9,20
reasonably 193:23	recirc 251:3	recommended 78:6	234:23	regional 160:13
reasons 17:22	recirculate 134:14	101:9 117:7	referring 29:1	213:20
30:13,18 31:23	135:17 136:16	134:12 136:16	47:11 50:22 68:16	regions 160:23
46:9,25 47:5 50:3	recirculating 135:3	139:18 148:8	75:10 89:11	161:19
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>



regression 67:8	146:19 248:14,18	removed 48:23	115:15 118:22	35:13,22 36:4
regular 82:17	258:4	49:24	168:21 169:12	47:7 61:21 64:25
84:11,23 260:11	reluctant 37:21	removing 49:3	171:17 173:22	69:22 89:20 92:13
regularly 63:4	<b>rely</b> 84:9	renew 202:21	175:24 189:11	131:24 132:1
184:1	<b>remain</b> 92:13	renewal 205:24	206:17,19 207:6	133:19,20 136:25
regulated 54:14	220:18	206:9	207:10	137:13 261:21
regulatory 201:20	remedy 258:3	renewing 206:5	represent 7:15	resistant 47:16
206:23	<b>remember</b> 9:9,13	rep 250:15 265:21	138:21 166:23	60:19 64:12 89:2
reheating 134:16	9:15 23:12 27:7	repair 150:22	267:5	187:10 188:1
reimbursed 217:17	32:25 33:5,6,9,23	repeat 167:2	representations	200:19
reinforces 51:1	34:6,11 35:10	186:19 228:13	266:10	resolution 227:14
rejected 239:13	39:3 40:1,3 41:25	rephrase 11:7	representative	resolve 181:4
259:6	42:9,11 45:6,9,11	<b>replace</b> 120:9 152:6	90:16 102:11	resolved 206:21
<b>relate</b> 8:4,9 24:4	72:11 74:17 78:8	replaced 98:1	103:9	207:12 219:11
<b>related</b> 8:13 34:5,9	79:2,6,6,7,20,24	replacement 30:18	represented 247:2	227:15,16 244:19
48:14 51:3 99:15	80:6 93:14 94:5,5	96:1 150:23	represents 230:1	244:21
108:16 110:9	94:7 105:13,14,16	replacing 182:8	reps 250:12 261:14	resources 83:24
113:22 118:6	110:11,12,18	<b>report</b> 22:7 49:12	request 25:19	respect 55:22 61:5
195:9 214:16	112:25 113:1	63:13,16 65:17,22	223:4,24	68:13 118:4 124:3
relates 44:22 45:9	118:22 124:11	66:1,3 69:23,24	requested 110:23	124:14 161:14
45:10	125:12,14,18	77:4 78:6,17	requests 209:22	162:7 164:15
relating 107:17	126:3 127:3,10,11	94:17,18 96:4	require 254:23	269:11,23 272:18
110:15 118:14	127:24 134:8	114:2 115:10	required 96:2	respond 102:19
155:23 184:23	135:24 136:12,15	118:7,8 125:1,6,7	176:12	responded 106:22
246:6	137:8 142:14	125:9,20 126:4	requirement 104:6	responds 108:12
relation 24:18	150:6 152:2 160:2	138:16 168:16,24	138:18	response 81:9
100:20 101:13	161:9 164:13	168:25 169:10,17	requirements	109:18 125:19
relationship 28:13	176:20 181:12,21	174:2 175:25	60:21 103:7,13,17	256:14 261:18
32:24 33:11 62:4	182:23 187:12	190:12 200:14	104:1,19 138:3	262:2 267:19
73:14 130:4	196:18 197:19	208:15 252:4	187:15 209:13	responses 97:14
210:12,15 211:12	200:4 201:13,14	reported 20:19	231:22 235:1	responsibilities
211:21 226:14	201:14 203:17,24	22:8,14 168:1	239:10	13:1 14:12 19:12
254:19	206:20 208:4	169:3 176:1	requiring 187:20	20:4,5 26:16
relationships 71:3	213:9,9 214:4	178:13 212:14,17	research 17:13,18	158:12
relative 64:18	216:2 220:9,16	233:1 270:22	researching 17:9	responsibility 20:7
65:19 253:10	221:7,8,9 225:11	<b>reporter</b> 1:25 6:9	17:12	20:10,17 21:7
274:12	225:12 226:2,4	7:3,6 186:8,11,15	reselling 211:20	54:20 59:5 105:15
relatively 49:18	228:6,10,20 237:6	186:20 205:17	reserve 270:7	105:17 107:6,8
50:8,8 98:17	240:3,10 244:13	216:5 221:25	residences 253:20	117:21,25 160:21
109:1 112:23	246:2,17 252:1,21	222:16 274:1,23	resident 160:15	190:16,17 234:18
171:3	256:8 261:6,8	reporting 22:17	residential 98:2	249:16 259:7
release 224:3	263:7 267:11	23:5 82:17 168:18	residents 253:9	responsible 13:11
relevant 65:19	269:8	169:23 170:1	resin 41:12 64:6,7	19:15 20:9 26:18
reliable 194:15	remembered 81:8	reports 43:17 64:4	65:9	40:18 42:12,15,16
relief 109:23 117:8	remind 123:23	79:18 82:12 95:14	resins 64:8	118:1 172:18,23
122:7 144:5,13	remodels 202:11	95:16 108:18	resistance 34:5,9	181:4 190:1



192:24   rest 270:7   rest 270:7   rest 270:7   rest 270:7   rest 270:7   rest 270:7   rest 24:18 170:5,7   restrict 68:11   restrictions 140:15   restrictions 140:15   27:8,10 39:9 41:1   114:17 115:19   47:25 54:24 56:11   114:17 115:19   59:11 60:14 70:5   23:25 24:13 36:15   220:12 13:17   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:24 post 99:24 post 99:24   23:25 23:22 240:23   23:23 103:23 108:23,24   24:35 107:14   24:35 107:14   24:35 107:14   24:35 107:14   24:35 107:14   24:35 107:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:21 24:23 107:24   23:25 24:23 107:24   23:25 24:23 107:24   23:23 20:22 107:14   23:25 24:13 36:15   23:24 107:23 24:24   23:25 24:23 36:17:14   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24 107:24   23:25 32:24   23:25 32:24   23:25 32:24   23:25 32:24   23:25 32:24   23:25
restate 35:25 186:4 restrict 68:11
restrict 68:11 restrictions 140:15 result 51:3 64:12 result 51:3 64:12 114:17 115:19 116:8 234:3 277:10 73:3 79:22 84:13 277:10 73:3 79:22 84:13 70:23 71:14 73:2 77:10 168:18 89:11,16 result 156:1 104:3 107:18 resulting 154:5 results 34:9 35:6 48:14 50:25 51:1 51:16,24 53:11 120:10 122:21 139:11 234:1 145:18 148:8 175:19 176:5,7,10 retail resulting 19:17 retail resulting 19:23 177:16:18 175:19 176:5,7,10 retail resulting 19:23 176:18 169:20 189:24 190:8,9 roundtable 169:20 187:26 110 175:19 176:5,7,10 retail resulting 38:24 40:2 39:19 retail as:20,20 39:19 retail as:20 39:19 193:17,25 194:10 260:10 rr 205:25 rule 12:8 rule 12:8 rule 12:8 rule 12:8 rule 13:0:9 237:12 1238:6 run 24:12 184:22 237:21 238:6 run 13:0:9 238:20 21:13:17:15:20 336:22 337:12 339:12 339:12 339:12 339:13 330:10 105:25 325:20:10.11 26:20:20 322:25 33:22 240:23 329:19 39:19 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:10 39:
restrictions 140:15         27:8,10 39:9 41:1         16:5 19:2,18,25         219:16,23 220:5         saying 30:10 44:10         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:26 17:17         420:10 12:21         16:81 67:20         78:21 97:16         46:21 76:17         78:21 97:16         48:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:26 47:13,14         45:25 47:13,14         45:26 47:17         48:18 89:11,16         16:31 100:17         70:28 18:24         70:28 18:24         70:29 20:22 20:20         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16         78:21 97:16
result 51:3 64:12 114:17 115:19         47:25 54:24 56:11 59:11 60:14 70:5         20:1 21:3,17 22:25 24:13 36:15         250:10,11 260:8 26:21 50:7,11 58:21         45:25 47:13,14 50:7,11 58:21 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:7,11 58:21 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:17,11 58:21 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:17,11 58:21 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12 70:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:17,11 58:21 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12 70:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:17,11 58:21 50:12 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12 70:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:17,11 58:21 50:10,11 260:8 26:24 50:12 70:12         45:25 47:13,14 50:17,11 58:21 50:10,10 22:20 17:20,11 70:24 17:20         48:14 50:25 51:1 16:3,21 119:13 170:13 10:10 10:59,21 170:31 10:59,21 170:31 10:59,21 170:31 10:59,21 170:31 10:59,21 170:31 10:31 10:59,21 170:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 10:31 1
114:17 115:19         59:11 60:14 70:5         23:25 24:13 36:15         260:21         50:7,11 58:21           272:10         73:37 79:22 84:13         172:2,3,17 173:21         salesman 107:24         59:13 66:12 76:17           resulted 156:1         84:18 89:11,16         189:24 190:8,9         22:25 32:22 40:23         103:23 108:23,24           270:16         96:13 100:17         roles 18:24         94:21 110:25         13:31 103:23 108:23,24           resulting 154:5         104:3 107:18         room 9:5 204:23         240:13         152:14 162:3           results 34:9 35:6         108:9,13,16,23         root 95:7 102:3         salesperson 32:25         164:25 182:11           55:11 66;6,4,53:11         120:10 122:21         106:14,15,24         salesperson 32:25         164:25 182:11           593:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         salesrelated 37:11         salesrelated 37:11         214:13,14 232:1           272:11         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         100:12,14,17         268:13,15 271:6           retaile 19:3, 4,14         155:7 162:13         roughly 110:9         100:25,5,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         187:23 188:20         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         108:16 70:12         49:17 50:25
116:8 234:3   70:23 71:14 73:2   73:3 79:22 84:13   73:3 79:22 84:13   73:3 79:22 84:13   84:18 89:11,16   96:13 100:17   70cls 18:24   7com 9:5 204:23   240:13   152:14 162:3   7cot 95:7 102:3   7cot 95:7 10
272:10         73:3 79:22 84:13         172:2,3,17 173:21         salespeople 22:20         78:21 97:16           resulted 156:1         84:18 89:11,16         96:13 100:17         roles 18:24         94:21 110:25         103:23 108:23,24           resulting 154:5         104:3 107:18         rom 9:5 204:23         rom 9:5 204:23         94:21 110:25         113:17 152:10,13           48:14 50:25 51:1         116:3,21 119:13         103:10 105:9,21         54:23 160:10,19         152:14 162:3         164:25 182:11           51:16,24 53:11         120:10 122:21         106:14,15,24         107:3 108:9 114:9         salesperson 32:25         54:23 160:10,19         199:1,5 202:2,12           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         233:8,15,25         101:12,14,17         214:13,14 232:1         24:13,14 232:1         24:25 182:11           retail 19:3,4,14         155:7 162:13         roughly 110:9         roughly 110:9         routine 168:18         19:16 128:18         49:17 50:23,25           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         routine 168:18         175:25         143:11,22 234:4         68:17 55:16         68:17 55:16           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         routinely 169:13         237:14 239:9         139:17,25 194:10         260:10         samples 63:5 68:10         139:3 140:25
resulted 156:1         84:18 89:11,16         189:24 190:8,9         22:25 32:22 40:23         103:23 108:23,24           270:16         96:13 100:17         roles 18:24         94:21 110:25         113:17 152:10,13           results 34:9 35:6         108:9,13,16,23         room 9:5 204:23         240:13         152:14 162:3           48:14 50:25 51:1         116:3,21 119:13         103:10 105:9,21         54:23 160:10,19         199:1,5 202:2,12           55:11 64:6,9,16         125:7 138:24         107:3 108:9 114:9         54:23 160:10,19         199:1,5 202:2,12           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         salesrelated 37:11         214:13,14 232:1           93:11 234:1         145:18 148:8         233:8,15,25         101:12,14,17         273:4           272:11         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         102:2,5,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         175:19 176:5,7,10         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         42:24 56:11         49:17 50:23,25           87:6 191:2,3         192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         260:10         samples 63:5 68:10         19:16 128:18         42:24 63:25 64:13           retain 38:7,9,20         187:23 188:20         208:21 210:16         208:21 210:16         237:14 239
270:16         96:13 100:17         roles 18:24         94:21 110:25         113:17 152:10,13           resulting 154:5         104:3 107:18         room 9:5 204:23         240:13         152:14 162:3           results 34:9 35:6         108:9,13,16,23         108:9,13,16,23         roof 95:7 102:3         salesperson 32:25         164:25 182:11           51:16,24 53:11         120:10 122:21         106:14,15,24         salespelated 37:11         214:13,14 232:1           55:11 64:6,9,16         125:7 138:24         107:3 108:9 114:9         saleselated 37:11         214:13,14 232:1           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         sample 64:7 101:5         268:13,15 271:6           139:11 234:1         145:18 148:8         233:8,15,25         101:12,14,17         273:4           272:11         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         102:2,5,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           7etail 91:3, 4,14         155:7 162:13         176:13 177:16,20         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         54:24 63:25 64:13           7etailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         39:19         49:17 50:23,25           retain 38:7,9,20         187:23 188:20         204:22 205:5         120:13,14 121:6         221:12,21 129:12         165:5 204:
resulting 154:5         104:3 107:18         room 9:5 204:23         240:13         240:13         152:14 162:3           results 34:9 35:6         108:9,13,16,23         root 95:7 102:3         240:13         salesperson 32:25         164:25 182:11           48:14 50:25 51:1         116:3,21 119:13         103:10 105:9,21         54:23 160:10,19         129:1,5 202:2,12           55:11 64:6,9,16         125:7 138:24         107:3 108:9 114:9         salesrelated 37:11         214:13,14 232:1           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         233:8,15,25         roughly 110:9         268:13,15 271:6           193:11 234:1         151:2 153:10,20         155:7 162:13         roundtable 169:20         101:12,14,17         273:4           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         routine 168:18         175:25         143:11,22 234:4         49:11,15           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         187:23 188:20         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         108:18 138:2           39:19         193:17,25 194:10         260:10         samples 63:5 68:10         139:3 140:25           retested 50:12         204:22 205:5         rule 12:8         122:12,21 129:12         155:5 204:15           reterested 50:12         208:21 210:16         226:7 227:1,3,6         22
results 34:9 35:6         108:9,13,16,23         root 95:7 102:3         salesperson 32:25         164:25 182:11           48:14 50:25 51:1         116:3,21 119:13         103:10 105:9,21         54:23 160:10,19         199:1,5 202:2,12           55:11 64:6,9,16         125:7 138:24         107:3 108:9 114:9         107:3 108:9 114:9         214:13,14 232:1           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         233:8,15,25         101:12,14,17         268:13,15 271:6           139:11 234:1         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         102:25,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           7etail 19:3,4,14         155:7 162:13         roundtable 169:20         104:5 117:19         49:17 50:23,25           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         routine 168:18         175:25         104:5 117:19         49:17 50:23,25           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         routinely 169:13         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         54:24 63:25 64:13           retained 38:7,9,20         187:23 188:20         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         108:18 138:2           39:19         193:17,25 194:10         rcetested 50:12         208:21 210:16         208:22 217:13         120:13,14 121:6         153:13 154:2,8           retested 50:12         208:21 210:16         221:22 217:13 </td
48:14 50:25 51:1       116:3,21 119:13       103:10 105:9,21       54:23 160:10,19       199:1,5 202:2,12         51:16,24 53:11       120:10 122:21       106:14,15,24       107:3 108:9 114:9       18ales related 37:11       214:13,14 232:1         55:11 64:6,9,16       139:3 140:6,12       139:3 140:6,12       118:18 128:12       18ample 64:7 101:5       239:11 255:9         93:22 95:19       139:3 140:6,12       145:18 148:8       233:8,15,25       101:12,14,17       273:4         272:11       151:2 153:10,20       roughly 110:9       102:2,5,17,23       says 48:19 49:11,15         87:6 191:1,7       168:16 170:12       roundtable 169:20       104:5 117:19       49:17 50:23,25         87:6 191:1,7       176:13 177:16,20       routine 168:18       175:25       119:16 128:18       49:17 50:23,25         retailers 191:23       176:13 177:16,20       187:23 188:20       207:5 215:17       235:6,11,14       68:21 75:16         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rr 205:25       120:13,14 121:6       108:18 138:2         retested 50:12       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         retered 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       227:10 228:6,8,25       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       233:6,23 224:3,12 <t< td=""></t<>
51:16,24 53:11         120:10 122:21         106:14,15,24         salesrelated 37:11         214:13,14 232:1           55:11 64:6,9,16         125:7 138:24         107:3 108:9 114:9         saline 27:19,22,23         239:11 255:9           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         sample 64:7 101:5         268:13,15 271:6           139:11 234:1         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         102:2,5,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           retail 19:3,4,14         155:7 162:13         roughly 110:9         104:5 117:19         49:17 50:23,25           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         176:13 177:16,20         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         54:24 63:25 64:13           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         175:25         143:11,22 234:4         64:15 65:17 66:1           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         routinely 169:13         235:6,11,14         68:21 75:16           retained 38:24 40:2         198:20,23 199:14         260:10         samples 63:5 68:10         139:3 140:25           retested 50:12         208:21 210:16         212:2 217:13         rule 12:8         122:12,21 129:12         165:5 204:15           retred 24:8         226:7 227:1,3,6         237:21 238:6         234:19         230:3,5 235:12         235:5 237:12
55:11 64:6,9,16         125:7 138:24         107:3 108:9 114:9         saline 27:19,22,23         239:11 255:9           93:22 95:19         139:3 140:6,12         118:18 128:12         sample 64:7 101:5         268:13,15 271:6           139:11 234:1         145:18 148:8         233:8,15,25         101:12,14,17         273:4           272:11         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         102:2,5,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         roundtable 169:20         104:5 117:19         49:17 50:23,25           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         54:24 63:25 64:13           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         routine 168:18         19:16 128:18         54:24 63:25 64:13           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         175:25         143:11,22 234:4         64:15 65:17 66:1           retailers 191:23         187:23 188:20         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         108:18 138:2           39:19         193:17,25 194:10         260:10         samples 63:5 68:10         139:3 140:25           retained 38:24 40:2         208:21 210:16         rule 12:8         122:12,21 129:12         153:13 154:2,8           retested 50:12         208:21 210:16         208:21 210:16
93:22 95:19       139:3 140:6,12       118:18 128:12       sample 64:7 101:5       268:13,15 271:6         139:11 234:1       145:18 148:8       233:8,15,25       101:12,14,17       273:4         272:11       151:2 153:10,20       roughly 110:9       102:2,5,17,23       says 48:19 49:11,15         87:6 191:1,7       168:16 170:12       routine 168:18       119:16 128:18       54:24 63:25 64:13         192:9 261:14       175:19 176:5,7,10       175:25       routine 168:18       119:16 128:18       54:24 63:25 64:13         retailers 191:23       176:13 177:16,20       175:25       routinely 169:13       235:6,11,14       68:21 75:16         retain 38:7,9,20       187:23 188:20       207:5 215:17       237:14 239:9       108:18 138:2         39:19       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       108:18 138:2         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rule 12:8       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       223:6,23 224:3,12         retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       235:5 237:12         re
139:11 234:1       145:18 148:8       233:8,15,25       101:12,14,17       273:4         272:11       151:2 153:10,20       roughly 110:9       102:2,5,17,23       says 48:19 49:11,15         retail 19:3,4,14       155:7 162:13       roundtable 169:20       104:5 117:19       49:17 50:23,25         87:6 191:1,7       168:16 170:12       routine 168:18       119:16 128:18       54:24 63:25 64:13         192:9 261:14       175:19 176:5,7,10       175:25       143:11,22 234:4       64:15 65:17 66:1         retailers 191:23       176:13 177:16,20       routinely 169:13       235:6,11,14       68:21 75:16         retain 38:7,9,20       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       108:18 138:2         39:19       198:20,23 199:14       rr 205:25       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       21:22 217:13       227:10 228:6,8,25       running 201:25       236:2       235:5 237:12         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       243:15,22 246:17       243:15,22 246:17       58:18 248:22       250:22 252:25
272:11         151:2 153:10,20         roughly 110:9         102:2,5,17,23         says 48:19 49:11,15           retail 19:3,4,14         155:7 162:13         roundtable 169:20         104:5 117:19         49:17 50:23,25           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         54:24 63:25 64:13           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         175:25         143:11,22 234:4         64:15 65:17 66:1           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         routinely 169:13         235:6,11,14         68:21 75:16           retain 38:7,9,20         187:23 188:20         207:5 215:17         237:14 239:9         108:18 138:2           39:19         193:17,25 194:10         260:10         ramples 63:5 68:10         139:3 140:25           retained 38:24 40:2         198:20,23 199:14         rr 205:25         120:13,14 121:6         153:13 154:2,8           126:2         204:22 205:5         rule 12:8         122:12,21 129:12         165:5 204:15           retested 50:12         208:21 210:16         212:2 217:13         234:19         230:3,5 235:12         236:2         236:2         236:2         235:5 237:12           retured 24:8         227:10 228:6,8,25         rural 130:9         243:15,22 246:17         243:15,22 246:17         58an 146:10,13,14
retail 19:3,4,14         155:7 162:13         roundtable 169:20         104:5 117:19         49:17 50:23,25           87:6 191:1,7         168:16 170:12         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         54:24 63:25 64:13           192:9 261:14         175:19 176:5,7,10         175:25         routine 168:18         119:16 128:18         64:15 65:17 66:1           retailers 191:23         176:13 177:16,20         187:23 188:20         207:5 215:17         235:6,11,14         68:21 75:16           retained 38:24 40:2         193:17,25 194:10         260:10         samples 63:5 68:10         139:3 140:25           retested 50:12         204:22 205:5         rule 12:8         122:12,21 129:12         165:5 204:15           retered 24:8         204:22 27:13         234:19         230:3,5 235:12         235:6,11,14         237:14 239:9         108:18 138:2           rule 12:8         120:13,14 121:6         153:13 154:2,8         122:12,21 129:12         165:5 204:15           rule 24:12 184:22         208:21 210:16         221:16 229:24         223:6,23 224:3,12           retured 24:8         227:10 228:6,8,25         runing 201:25         236:2         235:5 237:12           return 122:21         237:21 238:6         243:15,22 246:17         158:18 248:22         250:22 252:25
87:6 191:1,7       168:16 170:12       routine 168:18       119:16 128:18       54:24 63:25 64:13         192:9 261:14       175:19 176:5,7,10       175:19 176:5,7,10       175:25       143:11,22 234:4       64:15 65:17 66:1         retailers 191:23       176:13 177:16,20       187:23 188:20       207:5 215:17       235:6,11,14       68:21 75:16         retain 38:7,9,20       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       139:3 140:25         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rc 205:25       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       212:2 217:13       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         retured 24:8       227:10 228:6,8,25       running 201:25       236:2       235:5 237:12         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       243:15,22 246:17       250:22 252:25
192:9 261:14       175:19 176:5,7,10       175:25       143:11,22 234:4       64:15 65:17 66:1         retailers 191:23       176:13 177:16,20       187:23 188:20       207:5 215:17       235:6,11,14       68:21 75:16         retain 38:7,9,20       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       139:3 140:25         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rr 205:25       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       212:2 217:13       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       223:6,23 224:3,12         retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       250:22 252:25
retailers 191:23       176:13 177:16,20       routinely 169:13       235:6,11,14       68:21 75:16         retain 38:7,9,20       187:23 188:20       207:5 215:17       237:14 239:9       108:18 138:2         39:19       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       139:3 140:25         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rr 205:25       rule 12:8       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       212:2 217:13       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         retrospect 71:21       227:10 228:6,8,25       running 201:25       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       58:18 248:22       250:22 252:25
retain 38:7,9,20       187:23 188:20       207:5 215:17       237:14 239:9       108:18 138:2         39:19       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       139:3 140:25         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rr 205:25       rule 12:8       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       212:2 217:13       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       223:6,23 224:3,12         retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       58:18 248:22       250:22 252:25
39:19       193:17,25 194:10       260:10       samples 63:5 68:10       139:3 140:25         retained 38:24 40:2       198:20,23 199:14       rr 205:25       120:13,14 121:6       153:13 154:2,8         126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       212:2 217:13       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       223:6,23 224:3,12         retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       250:22 252:25
retained 38:24 40:2         198:20,23 199:14         rr 205:25         120:13,14 121:6         153:13 154:2,8           126:2         204:22 205:5         rule 12:8         122:12,21 129:12         165:5 204:15           retested 50:12         208:21 210:16         rules 6:7 10:13         130:8 216:22         208:23 222:21           69:21         212:2 217:13         run 24:12 184:22         221:16 229:24         223:6,23 224:3,12           retired 24:8         226:7 227:1,3,6         234:19         230:3,5 235:12         232:12 234:15           return 122:21         237:21 238:6         rural 130:9         san 146:10,13,14         245:1 250:17,19           returned 120:13         243:15,22 246:17         250:22 252:25
126:2       204:22 205:5       rule 12:8       122:12,21 129:12       165:5 204:15         retested 50:12       208:21 210:16       rules 6:7 10:13       130:8 216:22       208:23 222:21         69:21       212:2 217:13       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       223:6,23 224:3,12         retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       58:18 248:22       250:22 252:25
retested 50:12         208:21 210:16         rules 6:7 10:13         130:8 216:22         208:23 222:21           69:21         212:2 217:13         run 24:12 184:22         221:16 229:24         223:6,23 224:3,12           retired 24:8         226:7 227:1,3,6         234:19         230:3,5 235:12         232:12 234:15           return 122:21         237:21 238:6         rural 130:9         san 146:10,13,14         245:1 250:17,19           returned 120:13         243:15,22 246:17         58:18 248:22         250:22 252:25
69:21       212:2 217:13       run 24:12 184:22       221:16 229:24       223:6,23 224:3,12         retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         retrospect 71:21       227:10 228:6,8,25       running 201:25       236:2       235:5 237:12         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       250:22 252:25
retired 24:8       226:7 227:1,3,6       234:19       230:3,5 235:12       232:12 234:15         retrospect 71:21       227:10 228:6,8,25       running 201:25       running 201:25       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       S       158:18 248:22       250:22 252:25
retrospect 71:21       227:10 228:6,8,25       running 201:25       236:2       235:5 237:12         return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       5       158:18 248:22       250:22 252:25
return 122:21       237:21 238:6       rural 130:9       san 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19         returned 120:13       243:15,22 246:17       San 146:10,13,14       245:1 250:17,19       250:22 252:25
231:5 272:5
revealed 104:5   255:6,22 257:23   safe 49:18 50:8,9   sanitation 142:2   schedule 16:3
128:19   260:8 261:23   <b>safety</b> 60:21 148:21   <b>sap</b> 222:21,23   <b>science</b> 12:5
revenue 56:19 262:7,8,13 263:15 255:5 sarah 1:4 2:5 se 163:22 197:18
196:24 263:16 271:24 <b>sale</b> 108:4 <b>satisfaction</b> 143:12 221:8 268:20
review 25:2 47:23   272:2   sales 19:3,4,12,16   258:5   seasoned 129:18
59:20 60:5 83:4,5   righthand 171:9   23:5 30:23,25   satisfied 270:12   second 44:11 45:22
97:6 143:10 164:4   <b>rigid</b> 32:3   37:5,8,9,13 56:20   <b>saw</b> 44:2 61:18 78:6   50:17,23 60:15
164:10 191:17   ring 196:1   58:4,7 61:7,11   92:24 97:25   88:25 131:24
192:2 208:23   rings 177:13   70:5 85:25 86:10   105:12 130:20   138:1 166:16
252:25 260:4 <b>rip</b> 70:13 87:11,14,22,25 162:8 173:10 204:8,9 214:6
reviewed 25:4,7   risk 48:20 77:25   158:6 160:8,13   184:7 215:13   216:6 224:2 232:3
1 1 1



225.5 ( 241.10	59.17.60.24.62.12	244-24-250-0	4.56.2.111.10	-h44 255.15
235:5,6 241:10	58:17 60:24 62:12	244:24 250:9	set 56:3 111:19	shortterm 255:15
251:7	70:7 73:10 74:23	259:16	135:17 136:7	<b>shot</b> 191:16,17,19
secondary 28:4	86:21 108:1,3	sends 100:19 102:6	218:1,3,5 242:11	show 47:19 51:16
83:15 172:21,24	121:2 133:24	114:18	274:6	64:5 86:10 249:14
section 63:25 65:4	141:12 160:10	senior 257:2 261:12	setting 78:23	<b>showed</b> 63:17
65:5 68:18,19,21	178:10 179:25	sense 67:10 116:11	settled 227:17	226:11 264:13
74:7 75:23 138:2	188:15 191:7,21	136:20 137:23	sexton 84:6 122:4	shower 136:20
140:24 253:10	191:22,24 198:15	163:11	122:10 130:9	<b>showing</b> 107:16
see 48:4 56:15	210:18,23,25	sent 93:10 95:3,22	shaking 11:1	209:20 211:23
60:25 64:25 65:6	211:17,18 247:7,8	96:4,20 101:12	<b>shamberg</b> 2:8 4:3	226:5
65:11 68:4,19	250:16 261:15,16	102:17 105:20	7:12,15 25:19,23	<b>shown</b> 60:22 89:19
70:12 75:5,19,24	<b>selling</b> 17:10,25	107:21 114:3	50:19 88:20 89:7	<b>shows</b> 168:15 171:9
95:16 97:11,23	19:13 20:6 25:25	116:13,15 119:21	123:6,8,11 157:11	238:4
98:7 101:19,25	26:9,23 28:22	120:12 143:11	157:13 166:20	shreiner 169:5
117:7 133:8 138:1	29:3,7,8,10,13,13	185:1,5 192:22	221:19,22	side 81:24 162:4
138:4 153:13	29:18 30:17 31:8	207:25 209:14,22	<b>share</b> 17:23 54:12	266:25
158:4 164:21	31:17,25 40:19	216:13 217:24	86:1	<b>signed</b> 239:19
203:23 209:3	44:12 59:10 61:20	222:3 231:5 236:2	<b>shared</b> 117:15	257:2
217:9 224:12	61:24 62:7,12	238:10,22 239:9	170:9 266:19	significant 26:14
225:7 237:19	64:9 66:21 73:13	239:21 240:2,4,11	sharing 117:1	66:14 219:14,15
245:8 246:6	76:7 86:14,20	241:11 255:25	166:3	219:19
253:17 254:7	98:24 107:25	257:11,12,25	<b>shed</b> 130:8	signify 44:18
257:16 260:4	132:24 133:2	259:19 260:6	<b>sheet</b> 166:3	<b>signoff</b> 175:11
266:24	140:1 160:7	263:13 266:6	<b>sheets</b> 169:6	<b>silone</b> 132:7
seeing 34:8 61:14	170:25 171:1,1	268:1,2	shes 158:13 171:24	similar 8:23,23
79:12 122:6 137:8	176:23,25 177:24	sentence 64:3	171:25 232:1,4,9	82:13,14 115:13
141:3 232:15	178:7,18 179:10	257:16	232:16 233:14,24	172:2 193:20,22
243:11	191:10,12 197:1	separate 36:22,23	234:7,8,8,10	194:4 239:6
seek 70:24 184:6	202:23 211:5	39:6 62:6 78:23	235:8,10,13	similarity 152:23
seeking 166:7,25	215:24 240:20	91:17 162:18	250:22	similarly 1:4 2:7
206:25	260:19	163:9 170:15	<b>shift</b> 21:6	<b>similary</b> 1:16 2:17
seemingly 230:12	sells 191:13	209:6 215:1	<b>shifts</b> 184:12	simple 46:2 142:10
seen 59:23 60:3	send 74:22 96:15	september 107:22	<b>ship</b> 104:11	simply 120:8
97:19 130:17	101:18 102:11	251:14	shipment 269:7	simultaneous
137:1 150:5	103:8 105:24	serial 192:25	<b>shipped</b> 243:14	187:22
184:19,19 187:11	114:24 115:1	serration 99:24	270:18,21 271:1	single 63:6 273:7
205:7,10 224:23	116:13 119:12,15	served 253:9	shipping 20:11	sioux 18:21 168:7
232:22 246:8	130:8 217:6 230:5	service 37:11 39:13	105:1 172:23,24	173:19 177:2
257:3 264:7	235:12 239:24	163:5 215:15	short 85:6 88:10	sir 7:3 157:11
265:14 266:1,4	259:24	216:3 217:4	148:16	sit 90:9 99:10 170:5
270:1	sender 259:15	services 72:24 73:5	shortage 17:24	170:7 174:5 229:3
select 192:13	sending 95:17	73:11,17 74:12,22	shorten 205:4,6	site 34:19 101:19
sell 26:19 32:22	120:16 165:17	108:12 114:2	255:16,18	109:17 110:3,5,8
38:1 41:22 54:4,9	166:11 194:12	116:13 156:18	shorter 56:4	110:9,16 112:3,12
55:7 56:11,12	200:21 207:19	200:22 209:17	shorthand 223:10	112:17,23 113:12
57:1,7,25 58:16	208:15 233:13,21	226:22 257:2	shortly 41:24 42:2	113:21,22,23
0.11,7,20 00.10	200.10 200.10,21			113.21,22,23



114:8,12 115:5	183:15 188:3,6	southeast 159:11	spelled 153:6	92:21 105:5 124:2
122:6 127:21	191:21 197:2	160:17,20 161:5	spelling 152:8	126:16 135:8,20
128:2,7 142:13	199:1,2 208:13,13	161:15 210:19	spent 175:10	137:20 183:20
143:17 149:21	211:7 214:8,21	212:9 268:12,13	spikes 111:9	184:2 188:7
157:14,16,25	250:13,13 257:13	268:17,18 269:2	spite 62:18	198:12 204:18
sites 184:16	260:22 268:25	southern 168:13	split 160:9	206:7 238:6
sitting 118:13	269:23 270:14	space 32:9 73:5	spoke 24:22	241:18 242:10,11
situated 1:5,16 2:7	272:9	226:21	spot 179:4	262:11,20
2:17	solely 39:18 114:13	spartan 203:21	spread 77:24	standpoint 36:12
situation 55:9	solemnly 7:6	speak 24:25 59:7	spreadsheet 207:16	36:13 44:6 61:12
57:24 76:20,24	somebody 79:24	speaking 57:7	208:24 209:8,20	67:23 108:21
101:12 102:16	225:9 249:13	special 180:1	springs 210:16	117:2 163:1
104:10 106:19	somebodys 189:9	211:20	sprinkled 118:19	stands 94:17 96:24
213:10,24 215:22	266:7	specialty 196:12	spurred 92:23	stanger 213:4
221:17	someones 119:19	specific 9:13,15	square 255:11	217:24
situations 217:21	son 149:18	36:14 39:4 51:18	271:6	start 7:21 12:20
six 20:2 114:25	son 149:18 soon 224:18 250:6	51:18 72:11 78:1	stack 164:1	15:8 20:13 38:12
258:2	sorry 12:8 17:3	107:17 116:20	staff 51:8 82:17	53:6 86:14 100:13
sizable 218:21	29:12,16 66:9	124:15 128:25	94:23 97:14 106:7	112:5 117:4,11
size 201:22,25	78:7 112:10 117:9	142:6 147:19	155:21 185:19	121:6 125:22
202:1,9 226:3	124:13 168:13	175:24 223:8	stainless 176:22	started 12:23 15:9
skill 121:19	182:16 223:13	236:11 237:6		
skills 274:11			177:17 178:9,14 178:21	15:19 17:9,10,12
	233:18 252:15	241:6 247:24 267:22 269:24		17:25 29:3,7,13
slack 179:7	254:18 263:25		stamp 265:18	32:23 33:11,17
slang 236:8	sort 15:4 22:1 38:4	<b>specifically</b> 30:10 34:9 59:12 77:19	stamped 55:4 198:1 stand 272:23	42:3 85:24 93:19 97:5 98:24 99:7
sleeve 178:9 slide 179:21	63:24 64:11 149:20 168:19			
	sorts 234:16	87:16 99:3,16	standard 5:16 54:6	109:16,16 112:7
slow 221:15		108:9 118:5	55:12,15 64:19	122:13,14 125:21
small 86:2 88:7	sound 186:16 228:8	125:12 145:19	65:20 66:2,7	131:22 134:21
99:20 101:4 102:6 110:17 112:23	sounded 195:25	151:2 152:5,13 153:5 154:3 155:8	104:7,25 110:19	149:21 157:22
	sounds 58:21 source 26:25 33:12		110:22 126:19	161:8,22 187:13
156:5 163:2,3		155:24 212:8	129:23,23 131:22	187:24 190:24
217:15	74:13 75:16,17	233:9 239:1	147:21 148:1,13	196:25 199:14
smaller 38:2	121:2 176:21,22	244:25 245:16	197:22 198:14	200:10 229:23
191:23 210:25 211:3	249:7,13	specification 148:4 148:7	207:4 230:4	230:19,25 248:6
· -	sources 18:7,15,17	specifications	242:15 264:20 <b>standardization</b>	starting 218:25
sminkey 1:3 2:4	26:17 32:18 53:4	_		starts 48:18
sold 8:10 26:3	69:7 177:3 180:10	146:22 183:23	62:24,25	state 6:9 7:21 83:4
28:16 31:1,5 38:2	180:11,15 183:24	<b>specifics</b> 9:9 52:19	standardized 215:18	139:13 144:1
42:10 53:21 70:10	183:24	118:22		147:16,16 150:15
86:24 87:1 92:3	sourcing 16:18,22	specify 70:18	standards 13:4	151:4,7,13,25
104:13,14,18	16:24,25 31:8	speculate 128:12	33:19 34:3 35:8	154:12 155:11
124:14 132:22	33:20 35:12 36:24	165:14 223:19	54:19 56:13 57:6	198:4,7 202:14,16
145:16 150:12	190:24 199:13	speculating 251:4	62:21,23 66:19	225:23 242:22
161:11 162:12	south 159:15	speed 149:1	68:8 76:5,8 89:2	252:4
177:12 181:20,25	210:20	<b>spell</b> 273:7	90:15,19 91:8,14	stated 51:13 70:1



200.12
200:13
statement 109:6
117:6 138:10
154:10,11 155:10
155:12 232:10
237:16 268:19
statements 255:14
states 1:1,12 38:3
99:3 124:6,15,18
124:21 137:18
147:20,23 148:1
159:9 160:20
161:16 195:8
197:22,24 198:4
225:19 245:5,19
249:15 268:10,12
268:14 269:2
stating 75:15 152:5
245:18 257:15
station 159:20,21
station 139.20,21 stations 146:17
159:19
status 208:15
stay 35:2 158:15
stayed 170:18
steam 133:3,5,5,6
steel 176:22 177:17
178:9,14,21
179:19
step 86:11 125:6
147:10 245:6
stepping 182:11
steps 181:4 185:14
192:20 193:6
195:1
steve 22:8,9,14
56:19 168:21
169:4,7 173:25
218:4
sticking 202:13
<b>stipulation</b> 6:1 <b>stmfa76</b> 49:14
stock 86:23 211:3
stop 88:4 177:21
stopped 22:2
132:24 133:1

176:23 263:20
storage 100:3
196:12
stores 38:1 261:16
<b>storing</b> 172:22
story 203:24 204:1
<b>strange</b> 147:18 213:24
strategy 4:14 26:23
60:10 88:11 125:4
<b>stray</b> 167:3
<b>stream</b> 41:15 48:20
55:4
street 2:20 73:6
226:23 <b>strengthen</b> 72:19
strengths 240:21
stress 99:24 180:19
stressed 116:5
strike 39:18 102:10
stringent 254:6
stripe 49:4,21
strong 192:9 205:1
struggle 133:11
stuck 217:16
<b>studies</b> 92:17 93:21
93:22 205:7,10
studs 179:19,21
study 12:4 75:7
93:16 253:6
stuff 151:23 172:5
245:13
subdivision 263:2 subject 140:22
205:24 259:17
submit 128:17
submitted 183:2
223:22 230:18
258:8 269:16
274:25
subsequent 60:22
113:19 226:25
subset 88:7
substantially
257:17,22
<b>suburbs</b> 202:17

6 105 05
<b>successful</b> 85:25 98:22 191:2,10
98:22 191:2,10 193:5
suddenly 132:10
sued 227:3 245:12
245:21,22,24
246:9,10,10,16
suffered 36:4
suggest 237:12
suggesting 57:23
199:7,9
suggests 253:6
<b>suite</b> 2:10 3:6
suites 6:4
summaries 25:7
<b>summary</b> 169:21
170:5
sunbelt 107:24
160:11,16 210:9
211:11,19,21 260:12
sundry 152:9
super 209:11
supplied 211:8
supplier 73:8
214:19 220:18,21
269:8
suppliers 145:15
146:5 184:1 207:6
214:18 253:1,3
<b>supply</b> 21:13
218:24
<b>support</b> 94:23
supported 71:25
214:5
supports 179:22
<b>suppose</b> 87:2
187:23 242:20
supposed 179:4
<b>sure</b> 13:4 23:11,20 23:22 27:15 38:24
39:23 42:15 47:20
49:5 52:10 56:1
56:24 70:8,9
72:12 78:10 86:23
88:20 93:9 96:10

96:22 97:8,12
99:4 102:25 103:2
111:18 113:10
115:15 119:19,22
121:11,13 122:16
125:13,16 135:17
137:4 142:14
146:18 161:20
165:12 167:5
175:16 179:15
183:10,19 184:10
185:12 186:4
188:8 189:18
195:10 199:24
201:6 204:11
207:2,8 212:25
221:17 230:22
234:10 238:3
240:16 245:2
248:18 251:8
252:7 263:2 266:5
surmising 271:13
surprised 259:10
surprising 233:4
susan 1:15 2:15
suspect 144:16
224:10 237:8
suspected 213:17
suspects 109:22
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3 switch 76:19 77:1
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3 switch 76:19 77:1 77:19 78:11
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3 switch 76:19 77:1 77:19 78:11 122:19 132:6
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3 switch 76:19 77:1 77:19 78:11 122:19 132:6 186:16 187:25
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3 switch 76:19 77:1 77:19 78:11 122:19 132:6 186:16 187:25 214:1 256:13
suspects 109:22 128:14 203:25 suspended 42:11 sustain 204:17,22 205:2 sustained 205:3 swag 235:25 236:6 236:8 swear 6:9 7:6 swell 231:3 switch 76:19 77:1 77:19 78:11 122:19 132:6 186:16 187:25

274.7
sworn 274:7
<b>syndicate</b> 163:17
<b>system</b> 18:10 44:23
94:12,15 134:13
134:25 135:6,11
136:6,8,17,19
142:4 148:23
153:23 158:4
170:24 171:2
176:7,10 177:14
185:11 186:17
188:4 194:14
198:10,14 199:5,8
200:11 222:24
241:15 242:2
265:2,6
systems 17:23
19:20 44:3 46:8
88:15 92:22 134:6
134:11 135:16,23
138:1,3 139:19,22
140:2,16 184:4
190:3 194:10
241:21,25 242:1
262:21
T
t 181:11,15 223:6,6
235:9
table 64:24
take 11:11,14 16:11

## t 181:11,15 223:6,6 235:9 table 64:24 take 11:11,14 16:11 17:15 20:13 21:18 24:13 25:10 47:23 51:8 54:18 70:13 88:19 94:23 95:17 101:19 117:25 125:19 128:18 130:8 147:10 158:1 159:3 166:16 167:10 171:6,10 183:12 185:14 186:18 192:21 193:7,9 195:17 197:8,12 197:25 199:19,22 201:5 205:20,25



207.12.10.200.17	107.04.105.14		100.01.006.6	51 11 50 4 4 14
207:13,19 208:17	127:24 135:14	telephone 2:12,22	183:21 236:6	51:11 52:4,4,14
208:20 210:7	138:23 139:17	3:8	240:24 241:4	52:21,23 53:2,4,5
211:2 212:24	146:2 157:14	tell 8:12 24:23	terms 26:16 31:3	53:7,11,18,20
216:10,14 218:8	158:16 188:25	44:17,20 51:23	35:1 49:3 50:7	54:12,12 60:22
220:24 221:4	192:17 205:1	55:4 70:14 71:7	58:21 62:25 66:17	62:1,9 63:11,14
222:1,7,19 224:20	214:17 223:12	101:1,4,16 106:9	89:8 92:10 93:11	63:15,16 64:25
224:23 229:6,10	224:9 229:23	106:24 109:19,20	223:10 229:23	66:24 67:17 69:1
236:22 238:19	231:9 245:2	111:8 122:18	254:2	69:3,6,14,22 70:1
239:20 243:25	249:22 250:4,4	127:11 146:18	terracotta 235:6,9	72:3 90:1,13,15
244:6 249:22	253:24 271:18	152:3 167:10,16	territories 173:17	104:15 137:20
251:11,17 255:22	talks 133:4	171:11,11 197:12	territory 70:7	138:6,24,25 139:4
256:1,23 259:13	tank 117:9	199:25 201:10	173:17 210:19	139:7,8 183:19
259:18 260:23	tanks 144:6,14	203:12 205:15	225:16	202:6 229:21
262:24 264:17	248:15	206:1,20 207:19	test 23:10 34:8 35:6	231:10 234:15
265:11,13 266:9	tardy 209:15	213:5 216:14	48:14 50:12,25	237:9,25 239:8
266:12,23	task 94:4	218:12 221:4,4	51:1,3,15,24	253:15 254:5,12
taken 6:3,7 25:5	team 32:17 33:15	222:7 224:24	52:17 53:22 54:9	254:15,19,21
50:3 91:4 183:12	40:18 51:22,23	229:11 237:1	54:16,17 55:5,11	262:18,19
211:4 269:18	61:14 82:22,24	238:21 239:20	59:3,13,16 62:20	testings 254:23
274:5,11	83:18 84:2 90:19	244:7,14 245:4,11	63:7,17 64:9,13	tests 33:25 34:12
takes 32:6 55:11	162:22 174:14	249:23 251:17	66:13 67:7,7,11	36:17 44:22 47:2
76:23 98:19	189:25 209:17	252:21 256:1,11	67:13 68:10	49:12 59:11 61:10
talk 10:12 51:20	214:5 215:13	258:20 259:18	104:20,24,24	62:3 64:4 69:9
90:10 92:8 117:18	250:18	261:2 265:13	105:6 138:20	72:9 84:16 89:20
137:13,15 143:2	teams 56:16 82:25	267:14	139:10 204:13	183:19 185:15
149:23 166:13	174:4	<b>telling</b> 151:10	206:16,18 207:10	206:25 215:8,18
198:11 254:2,4	technical 43:18	temperature 101:2	230:5,8,10 231:11	231:9,16 242:24
269:5	51:9,22,23 52:3	101:5 111:16,17	231:13 235:2,24	254:18,18,20
talked 33:15 36:11	52:19 56:16 58:23	116:2 129:7	236:3,5,10,14,15	texas 173:18
47:6,9 67:1 72:12	59:6,8 61:14 66:5	204:16,23 255:1	237:13,20,21,24	225:18 232:2,3
72:13 79:7 84:23	67:13,16 69:17	255:15 271:12	237:24,25 243:2,4	250:13
93:25 117:23	71:16 72:6,7,18	temperatures	243:6,7	thank 59:19 107:15
125:1 127:20	83:8,23 84:3,9	148:8 254:9,14	<b>tested</b> 52:7 55:6	130:16 136:23
129:11 136:1	90:8,14 94:22	temporarily 50:3	63:6 138:9 183:14	150:3 153:15
174:3,14,21 175:1	95:25 97:14 106:7	temporary 56:2	254:4	164:2 203:8
175:6 188:22	108:12 114:2	ten 62:13 135:15	<b>testified</b> 91:18 92:9	207:12 256:22
204:5 214:12	121:3,18 137:7	146:3 151:21	testify 274:7	259:12
225:5 231:10	138:19 143:2	219:19,21	testimony 7:7	thanks 221:22
233:2 241:1	156:18 157:7	tended 270:23	123:19 174:3	<b>thatll</b> 10:21
247:17 262:17	200:16,22,24	tennessee 1:12	175:4 177:15	thats 10:23 22:21
268:18 272:19	209:17 215:13	159:13	188:21 194:5	26:14 34:22 41:7
talking 5:12 35:17	217:3 238:17	tenure 86:9 135:25	210:10 228:24	43:23 44:6 48:1
41:16 47:13 67:15	239:15 252:4	177:1	229:2	49:6,7 54:20 62:1
68:13 74:24 78:19	257:2 271:8	term 16:18,20	testing 33:17,21,24	62:14 63:7 67:24
79:2 89:6 108:7	technicaltype 158:3		33:25 34:4 40:11	68:15 71:8,14
113:17 123:16	tee 235:7	141:2,4,6 148:16	40:16 49:6,12	72:4,4 75:11
	1	I	I	ı



83:17 89:5,6,10	75:24 83:7 89:19	105:25 106:1	46:24 47:7 48:12	175:8 177:22,23
90:5 96:9 100:4	89:24 90:14 92:6	132:24 159:6	50:8 52:1 53:13	178:16 180:8
102:17 104:10	95:1 96:2,3	198:6 211:4,5,6	53:13 55:9 56:2	181:3,5,8,9,13,15
105:5 106:2	100:23 102:6,21	thickness 201:23	58:9 61:7,10	182:25 183:9,10
119:18 126:16	105:6 106:3,6,8	<b>thin</b> 103:3	63:13,19,19 71:21	183:11,12,21
134:19 136:6,24	106:10 107:4	<b>thing</b> 23:9 96:9	71:24 77:8,9,23	184:7,11 188:8,21
138:22 139:3	109:21 111:9	100:4 102:25	77:23 78:16,18	188:25 189:18,19
140:11 141:2	113:4,5 124:20	129:10 141:24	80:4,23 81:8 82:7	191:3 192:15
144:14,16 147:6	126:22 137:18,19	143:18 145:7	86:9,16,17,22	193:4,4 194:5
147:10 148:3,21	137:24 139:17	160:14 164:10	87:4,12,12,18	197:3,6 199:15
149:3 150:1	141:10 142:8	178:1 192:9 196:2	88:16,18,24 89:5	200:4 206:21
151:12 152:25	146:7,12 148:19	211:25 270:24	92:5,5 93:18,24	207:3 209:24
153:23 155:14,15	149:6 151:11	273:7	94:16 95:11,15,15	213:9 214:15,17
156:24 160:5	152:23 153:2	<b>things</b> 10:1 40:5,8	97:19 98:14,17	214:24 215:11,12
161:7,22 164:9	154:1 159:16,22	51:8 59:7 62:4	102:1,13,20	217:2,9 218:5
176:7,11 182:13	161:19 169:6	76:4 84:8 90:11	104:12 105:11,11	220:10 221:11
182:18,22 186:13	172:19,19,20,21	90:20,21 91:18	105:15 106:7	225:11 227:15,17
186:19 190:15	173:10 178:16	96:15 97:18 98:21	108:23,25 109:5,8	228:6,9,10,14,20
192:8 196:3	179:8,17 193:7	100:12 102:21	109:15 112:22	228:22 229:20
197:20 198:5,17	195:7 198:12	104:21 106:10	114:1,7,9 115:4	230:14,19 234:25
198:17 199:9	203:25 204:25	109:8,17 110:1	116:14 117:3	234:25 235:10
200:13 202:1,2	207:16 211:13,18	111:19 112:17	118:23 120:15,16	236:9 238:2 240:1
203:4 204:15	212:9 234:12	113:20 117:11	121:13,14,15,16	240:2,4,11,12,19
208:19 209:19	241:20 242:17	118:21 123:13,15	121:20 122:2,2	241:25 242:7
211:16 213:5	245:17 246:3,3,10	125:25 128:13,20	124:7,7,8,9,15,24	245:17,23,23,24
217:11 219:11	247:4,22 249:2	137:21 149:23	126:19 127:1,1,2	251:22 253:12,14
221:17 227:25	251:19 252:19	152:7,9,12,17,25	127:7,11,13 128:9	254:1,3,7 255:12
233:4 237:20	254:19 260:4	153:7 157:4 158:4	128:10,15,25	255:13 257:7
242:18 247:9,21	271:1	158:9 159:25	129:21,21,22	260:2 263:15
251:20 253:19	theyll 69:6 141:25	169:19 174:15,16	130:3,4,10 131:25	264:25 266:5,6
254:7 255:21,21	141:25	174:17 175:1,8	133:3,8,10,13,17	267:24 268:15
260:5 264:7,14	theyre 53:13,14,14	178:17 179:17	133:23 134:18	273:12
273:12	67:18 92:18 96:14	180:2,2 185:14,22	135:8,10 136:11	thinking 113:6
theirs 61:16 256:14	97:3 114:3 152:13	187:12,21 190:4,7	136:14,15 137:4,7	165:19 174:17
theoretical 116:11	153:5 155:1	191:4 202:11	137:12,20 138:13	252:12,18 258:13
theoretically 272:8	156:18 158:8	213:15 215:6	139:11 141:8,12	thinks 262:9
theorized 64:16	159:21 168:8	216:21,24 217:15	141:19,20 142:12	<b>third</b> 48:18 54:7
thered 83:2 235:13	173:2 187:10	231:2 242:7 246:8	142:19 143:6,8,15	57:2,17 58:6
theres 38:25 39:23	199:3 202:2,12	250:6 264:16	143:17 144:3	60:23 66:17
39:24 44:21 49:6	208:3 210:15,17	266:22 267:17	147:10 148:17	171:13 172:22
50:2,2 52:5,5,13	210:23 211:3,14	think 8:14 14:10	156:5 157:22	178:9 198:18
57:11 61:25 62:24	211:17 217:1	22:21 28:21 29:10	159:1,4,11 160:16	223:23 252:23
64:24 65:2,3,5	218:20 219:18,19	30:7,15 32:4,10	161:25 162:25	thirdparty 34:14
66:23 67:16 68:18	220:20 247:11	32:10,21 42:2	164:12 166:10	35:1,2 48:21
69:18,24 70:9,15	262:10	43:2 44:19 45:10	171:24 173:7,15	52:23 55:22 58:12
72:24 74:7 75:23	<b>theyve</b> 90:11 91:4	46:2,3,11,12,24	173:15,18 174:13	62:9 63:10 70:24
	<u> </u>	l l		l



71.2 17 76.11	79.0 70.0 90.19	time alime (4.25	40 95-2 124-22	4mas4ad 141,22 22
71:3,17 76:11	78:9 79:9 80:18	timeline 64:25	top 85:2 124:22	treated 141:22,23
77:2,20 85:2	82:4 85:11,22	timer 134:14 140:5	203:10,10 204:9	treatment 142:10
89:15	86:2,18 90:11	times 8:2,3 82:23	205:22,24 213:3	253:2,4,7
thomas 5:3 251:13	92:21 95:8 96:12	83:7 89:24 102:4	218:12 219:14	trend 44:2 118:13
255:24 261:1	97:18 98:10,19	102:14 109:18	221:1,3 229:9	118:25
264:4	99:12,17 100:18	113:5 119:19,24	231:25 235:4	trends 118:2,3,6
thought 31:13,20	100:22 101:15	128:10 141:25	250:9 251:13	trial 270:7
32:2,5,7 42:18	102:9 103:14,17	142:9 156:12	252:16,20,23	tried 57:25 58:1
72:1 75:4 134:1	103:25 104:7	159:16 192:11,15	255:24 259:15	132:22 209:5
158:5 178:10	105:12 106:6	209:17 245:14	261:1 264:3	trouble 179:7
179:8 181:3	108:13,25 109:5,7	251:16 268:21	topic 81:5 84:23	true 107:2 113:18
230:20	109:25 110:23	timeto 138:8	91:18 175:25	115:21 138:10
thoughts 202:16	111:8 114:25	timetofailure 139:1	189:22 249:21	140:9,11 199:17
thousands 181:22	118:15 120:15	timing 145:16	topics 123:13	254:9 274:10
181:23 220:11	121:1,5,19 123:8	tiniest 242:25	130:25 188:20	truly 52:18 247:11
three 8:3 22:20	125:7 131:4	tired 173:18	total 64:7 65:9 86:5	truth 7:8,8,9
49:18 50:13 65:23	133:21 134:9,15	title 22:9 48:10	220:6	122:18 127:11
65:23 82:23 83:7	134:16 135:7,9,14	83:20 208:5 274:6	totally 173:6	206:20 244:14
86:7 87:3 97:5	135:14,18,20	titled 60:10 136:24	touch 190:19	252:21 258:20
111:6 124:21	136:17 138:10	240:7	touched 21:5 42:21	274:7,7,8
132:14 160:23	140:1,23 142:12	<b>tjb</b> 1:2	70:22	<b>try</b> 10:17 11:7
172:19 189:13,16	148:15 149:16	today 10:16 99:10	touching 179:18	36:14 95:6 128:17
223:13 224:14	151:20 155:22	135:10 159:8	tough 219:5	134:14 144:20
268:21	159:25 162:22	162:25 168:14	tour 225:6,7	147:9 167:1 185:7
threequarter 202:3	165:15 168:3	172:1,9 179:19	tout 242:3,6	254:16
threw 195:25	169:4 171:18	188:10,21 194:5	town 160:2,2 162:5	<b>trying</b> 12:9 45:9
throwing 209:7	176:25 186:22	210:10 220:21	track 193:1	58:16,17 67:18,25
ticket 58:9	187:6,14 191:13	229:3 234:2	tracked 119:1	124:8 136:12
tie 150:15	191:19 196:25	told 28:19 99:4	<b>tracking</b> 94:12,25	152:15 157:22
<b>tied</b> 148:5	198:23 199:3	138:21 165:11	118:2 119:21	163:12 174:23
<b>tight</b> 100:8	205:4 206:12	175:6 246:18	tracks 118:3	179:4 180:22
time 11:11 15:10,21	211:3,7 218:25	247:1	trade 26:3	181:21 183:20
16:15,19,23,25	226:19 227:17	tollgate 259:17	trail 209:6	187:12 191:7
21:9 22:10 28:15	230:11 231:1	260:1,2	<b>trailer</b> 196:9,11	198:13 228:10
30:20 34:10 36:8	232:5 234:6	tom 22:23 84:6	trailers 196:11	233:15,25 241:16
37:13,19 38:13	236:13 239:25	113:4 122:8	training 200:25	252:1 253:14,18
39:22 40:15,17	251:13 255:16	143:18 157:15,18	transcript 274:5,11	254:3,8 256:11
41:16,21 42:4,18	256:10 258:11	157:20 158:9	transcripts 25:4	266:20,21 273:4
44:23 45:13 48:10	259:25 262:5	163:2 225:14	transfer 68:23	<b>ts</b> 181:20,24 214:12
49:3 52:20,22	266:2 274:5	250:3 261:16	transferred 64:10	<b>tube</b> 177:9 179:5
53:1 56:4 60:2,6	timeframe 15:23	263:10	transition 129:11	198:1,2 243:9
60:15 61:18 62:4	17:5 28:19 35:11	toms 189:11	129:16	<b>tubing</b> 9:11 15:7
62:12 65:19,22	86:25 112:21	tool 177:9 226:10	transitioned 162:23	18:5 25:25 28:4,6
66:3 69:20 71:14	136:3 161:7,16	231:21	transmitted 207:6	28:20,24,24 29:21
73:20 74:15,16	162:9 187:13,24	tools 109:4 151:22	travel 173:19	29:24 30:6 31:2
75:3 77:8,17 78:1	248:5	178:3,3,5	travis 261:14,16,18	34:5 35:7,14,23
	I	I	I	I



Page 3	8
--------	---

230:23 231:3 235:12,18,24 238:12 242:25 243:1,2,5,14,24 244:17 245:25 246:7,12,16,20 247:3 250:8 253:16 255:16,17 255:18 256:11 257:12 258:3 261:13 265:3 268:20 tubings 115:17 231:11 243:18 tucson 203:20 turn 60:8 63:23 64:23 75:22 139:17 193:10,16
208:18 244:22
<b>turned</b> 247:12
turning 74:4
<b>two</b> 8:3 14:10 16:5
19:17 45:8,11 86:7 92:5 102:21 109:2 111:6 117:10 124:20 125:23 132:7 174:6 178:12 187:19 191:4 197:3 220:1 223:13 245:25 266:22 267:24 <b>twominute</b> 266:23
twopage 239:17
260:24
type 28:5 30:16
118:11 147:5 154:4
<b>types</b> 154:13
typewritten 274:9
typical 238:12
typically 27:15
28:3 54:11,20
57:20 59:5 62:23
70:14 94:21
, U.I I / T. 2 I

104:11 105:5

107:6,7 141:22 154:25 157:15 158:8 179:18 183:9 242:6 U **u** 45:10,10 225:18 **uhhuh** 10:15 15:12 40:9 45:4 47:24 49:19,22 55:2 64:2 74:6 77:18 78:13 90:2 99:1 99:14 100:14 103:15 104:4 105:8 108:17 114:15 127:25 130:3 151:9 188:19 208:25 222:6 232:17 238:7 243:10 260:9 **uhuh** 124:25 264:14 ultimately 43:24 132:21 170:9 176:1 227:3 unacceptable 64:16 uncharted 70:7 **uncommon** 69:17 77:7,10 78:20 91:20 92:7 114:23 understand 8:17 11:5 34:24 36:1 67:14,25 71:17 72:3 74:20 75:2 77:15 98:16 103:21 109:1 115:25 121:16,22 125:24 127:6 130:7 138:20 167:5 186:5 252:7 understanding 9:7 10:10 27:13 50:6 67:15 69:8 74:11 74:25 75:6,9,19 94:19 97:22 98:11

98:12,16 127:7 149:22,24 153:18 159:4 181:19 204:17 227:21 234:6,20 235:8 243:1 245:7,22 250:21 understood 11:8 165:13 177:16 245:20 undertake 46:9 undertaking 76:2 underway 167:5 unfortunately 180:24 208:12 **union** 176:19 180:13 **unique** 31:25 32:5 **united** 1:1,12 38:3 99:3 124:6,15,18 124:20 147:23 148:1 159:9 160:20 161:15 198:4 245:5,19 249:15 268:10,12 268:14 269:1 universal 147:24 universe 270:2 university 11:19 12:7 unrelated 215:1 **unseat** 192:10 unseated 192:8 **unusual** 69:19 180:19 213:22 **upc** 147:24 148:13 **update** 82:2 85:6 updates 82:1 **upfront** 234:15 upgraded 194:7 **upinor** 198:5 **uponor** 235:18,22 246:9 **upper** 222:21 **ups** 196:13 use 41:5 53:16

57:10,12 73:7 112:17 128:8 134:5,25 135:5,12 135:13,22 136:8 137:25 138:3 139:18 140:1,15 177:9 179:9,10,19 186:17 194:13 196:21 200:18 215:17 226:6 231:21 236:6 240:23 user 214:1 270:17 users 194:13 214:9 uses 111:15 128:2 usually 21:15 92:4 95:11 96:14 100:18 103:3 106:9 115:19 124:1 141:23 147:17 160:21,22 160:24 168:23 169:1,11 174:5 192:5 217:23,24 226:11,12 268:16 **uv** 45:22 131:24,25 133:19 231:11,11 231:13 236:5 237:8 V

V v1:6,18 valentine 79:25 80:8 81:1,10 valid 53:12 validity 52:14 62:1 66:24 67:2 89:25 value 46:18 88:8 220:6 valued 240:7 valve 95:2 109:23 117:8 122:7 146:19 valves 144:5,13 171:1 248:14,18 vanguard 27:6 28:6



Pag	<u> </u>	39	)
1 44	_		,

<b>vans</b> 196:11	149:7	133:8 149:23	216:23 234:21	87-14-22-00-23
	visits 27:3 109:17	159:2 165:4 175:7	240:8 266:20	87:14,22 90:23 101:23 102:1
variability 69:25			240:8 266:20	
75:3,5 126:6	110:4,5,8,9	178:11 193:2	wasteful 136:18	104:2 110:13
271:14	127:21 149:21	201:20,24 206:8		116:5 119:1 123:2
variable 142:5	visone 36:13	206:14 213:20	water 44:3,4,23	129:7 145:18
variables 74:11	visual 229:25 231:7	217:4,6 240:13	45:1 92:23 98:9	165:2 170:14,18
146:8 179:8	voice 92:17	250:17	100:1,21 101:2,2	173:18 175:2
variation 60:22	voiced 90:3	wanting 46:7 69:2	106:5,6 109:22,23	190:6 191:15
74:14,17 75:8,10	void 147:7	97:6	109:24 111:7,9,10	200:20 217:19
75:17,18,20	volgstadt 252:11	wants 219:3 234:25	111:17,18,18,22	220:4 225:16
varied 118:16	<b>volume</b> 186:12	warehouse 193:1	111:22 112:2	239:7 242:19
varies 241:8		210:18	115:17,18 116:3	246:20 247:4
various 222:4		warn 146:15	129:6 134:16,17	249:11 251:20
235:16 249:14	wacker 2:10	warned 248:24	135:1,6,23 136:16	256:17 263:23
252:3	wait 202:16 217:1	warning 248:16	136:19 137:25	272:1,22 274:13
vegas 141:12	waited 218:25	warranties 147:7	138:3 141:2,4,7,9	ways 113:19
<b>vendor</b> 176:12	waiting 156:22	152:23 154:25	141:9,11,18,22,24	website 146:15
180:5	191:18 202:15	warranty 4:20	142:2,7,10,22,24	wed 31:20 51:20
vendors 18:8	224:3	95:24 119:5	143:5,6,13,20,23	74:23 81:25 82:23
176:15,17,18	wall 103:3 201:22	150:15,20,22,25	144:2,4,15 146:11	83:4 115:3 138:15
180:4 183:14,22	243:1	151:17,20,24	146:12,14,16,16	147:3 169:20
206:18 207:11	want 10:12 18:23	152:5,7,11,20	147:1,3,8 148:13	178:7 202:12
veracity 53:17	24:23 39:1 46:1	153:6,11,17,18	148:20 149:4,5,6	216:19
verbally 10:25	47:7,25 48:2 57:8	154:3,8,10,17,20	149:8,10,12	wednesday 6:5
version 155:4	57:10,12 69:1,5	155:8 165:17,18	158:18,25 159:12	48:2 252:3
versus 7:16 31:3	70:14,17 71:7	165:24 166:4	160:3 161:5,13,17	week 82:23 83:7
36:13 68:4 114:19	96:10 97:12	267:17,19 268:5,6	161:19,25 179:25	194:24
142:25 205:8	102:25 103:1	272:22 273:6	180:1 188:22	weighed 185:20
231:5 234:3	105:4 107:1 117:3	warren 163:16	189:8 200:13,14	wellregarded 53:7
vetted 249:20	119:16 123:7	257:18,18 258:7	200:17 213:16,17	53:10
vice 21:13 195:24	127:6 130:13	wasnt 16:22 47:16	213:25 215:5,8,8	went 12:13 13:21
208:5 218:22,24	131:6 145:6 158:6	47:16 49:8 54:5	215:9,16,18,19	31:23 37:10 44:21
viega 134:10 198:3	160:5 164:10	66:2,13 71:1	233:3 240:24	57:16 92:21 97:6
246:10 256:10,17	167:5 179:18	84:22 85:2,4 86:4	241:3,4,6 247:18	109:7,25 114:25
view 66:23 102:12	202:2 203:2	87:21,21 88:9,9	247:23 248:9,17	121:19 145:9
121:24 234:20	211:24 221:14	96:11 103:3,10	248:23,25 249:5	149:13 157:3
246:21 247:4	242:7 270:8	110:22 111:19	249:17 253:3,22	162:22 173:4,9,19
248:8,21	wanted 20:21,22	116:15 127:13	253:25 255:10	175:21 217:16
<b>visibility</b> 97:13,21	21:18,20 30:8,18	128:11 133:7	268:10,14,16	218:23 230:7
visit 27:5 106:18	32:22 33:16 46:4	138:10 144:9,17	waters 141:23	260:5
110:16 112:23	46:6 54:21 70:23	155:15,16 163:6	146:25	west 2:10
114:8,12 128:2,7	71:19 73:15 88:8	163:19 172:5	waterworks 146:15	western 160:24
143:17 149:13	91:19 92:25 97:11	178:15,15,23,24	waverly 1:13	168:10
visited 27:1,6 33:14	97:11,12,13,15,20	181:22,23 184:13	way 24:4 32:21	weve 53:3,3,3 55:3
149:21	98:10 117:3	184:13 185:17	36:2 41:8 51:21	59:21 71:2,2
visiting 111:11	123:14 129:10	196:3,4 209:11	67:7 68:15 69:8	89:18 100:25
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>



Page	4	0
------	---	---

102.25 107.5	1,00.0		252.19.266.14	100.6 17.24
102:25 107:5	169:8	workmanship	252:18 266:14	188:6,17,24
109:2 119:19,20	window 51:12	154:6	273:2	193:12 197:2,18
120:25 131:10	271:14	works 94:19 191:15	wtiness 7:5	199:12,12 200:4
134:11 136:15	windustrial 208:10	200:23	X	201:17 202:24
142:13 147:4	winnelson 232:13	world 53:15 198:12	<b>XXXXXXXX</b> 7:23	204:20,23 211:13
158:24 159:12	winwholesale 208:3	209:12	<b>AAAAAAA</b> 1.23	213:9 214:22,22
183:10,11,12,12	208:8 210:1	worryfree 139:23	Y	217:14,14,14,14
191:12 193:7	218:21 219:9	worth 202:5 234:19	yeah 10:11 23:14	219:22 220:3,14
194:6 197:8	220:5 221:14	wouldnt 13:6 32:7	23:16,18 29:2	221:21 224:18
199:12,19 205:20	winwholesales	54:4 67:12 69:14	30:12 31:19,25	225:2,11,12,12
207:13 214:17	219:13	80:25 91:1 112:18	32:13,16 38:5	227:2,2,8,11,13
216:10 217:21	wisconsin 225:19	120:1 143:22,22	41:7,18 42:5,7,9	228:9,16 229:17
218:8 220:24	withstand 148:16	163:19 184:10	45:15,15,22,24	233:10 235:19
222:1,19 224:8,20 229:6 233:2	254:13,20 255:14 witness 6:10 7:10	204:24 205:5 207:5 214:7	46:24,24 55:24,24	239:1 241:20,20
239:16 243:25	88:23 274:4	243:17 248:7	55:24 56:12,23	243:3,3 253:12 255:21 256:8
247:17 249:18		253:21 255:17,19	58:5,12 63:4,19	
253:24 255:22	wondering 75:11 113:23 238:11	255:20	63:23 68:1 77:15	261:8,22,24 262:4 262:9,9 263:6,6,8
256:23 262:24	wont 148:21	<b>wound</b> 184:16	80:1,1 82:7,7,14	264:25 265:21,25
264:18 268:18	wont 148.21 wood 107:22,23,24	<b>wow</b> 186:9	83:17,24,24 84:5	265:25 266:3,3,6
whats 11:16 50:6	woodworker	wrap 267:6	86:22 88:1,20	266:12 272:24
55:25 58:19 94:15	157:24	write 155:19	93:20,24,24,25	273:2
94:18 151:20	word 148:8 193:17	226:20 252:12,17	94:2 96:14,25	year 10:7 11:20
171:6 196:8,10	236:8	writes 60:16 68:8	97:2 98:14 99:11	12:9 31:24 56:20
203:5 204:18	words 90:23 112:13	74:10 76:2 235:5	102:1,1 105:4	62:13,14 65:4
219:23 234:6	137:15 148:4	writing 93:23	107:4 108:5 110:5	76:23 87:9 102:14
238:19 250:21	155:19 204:19	154:19 170:9	112:1,1 113:16	113:7 118:16,17
259:13 260:23	work 27:3 32:12	231:25 234:8	115:11 116:4,12	132:23 151:22
265:11	74:3 80:2 133:11	250:23 266:7	117:24 118:3,7	169:14 170:4,4,4
wholesale 38:2,3	144:11 145:3	written 4:19 48:11	120:3 123:6	200:15 219:16
150:11 192:23	157:25 161:12	60:11 67:8 93:11	124:17 126:18,18	220:1,2 224:23
208:17 218:19	190:19 196:6	113:14 155:16,16	127:19 130:24	225:13,15 247:9
222:11 260:16	258:4	164:19 168:25	131:2,8 132:7,19	yearandahalf 8:22
wholesaler 210:22	worked 10:6 59:9	169:10,12 185:9	134:7 142:23	years 13:14 14:10
210:24 250:14	81:20 154:17	252:9	143:25 145:6	15:2 16:5 19:17
wholesalers 192:23	180:25 188:13	wrong 152:9	146:1 147:22,25	20:2 34:1 40:20
193:9,16 210:23	229:12	178:21,24 180:18	148:15 150:6,16	45:16 49:18 50:13
211:1,20 260:12	working 12:13,15	208:9 214:13,16	150:18 153:4	65:3,23,23 72:2
whos 48:6 107:23	12:20 13:24 15:19	215:3,22 216:18	154:24 160:4,5	85:15 86:7,10,11
163:2 200:20,21	16:8,10 83:6	218:18 221:12	163:15 164:1	86:12 95:15 97:5
208:2 218:24	117:8 122:7	222:10 227:23	167:18,23 169:11	99:8 109:2 113:19
220:4 251:1	125:21 146:19	247:15 269:8,17	170:11,13,22	114:6 117:10
wife 219:18	158:8 168:7,14	269:25 271:7	172:8,8 175:18,20	135:15 138:22
<b>wild</b> 166:11	174:8,17 182:5	wrote 125:15	175:20,20 180:9	139:23 142:14
willingness 27:3	206:5 248:18	130:23 150:7	183:18,18 185:4	145:4 146:3
wilson 125:11	250:18 269:22	235:16 250:3	185:25 186:25	151:21,21 153:20
	I	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>



Page	41
------	----

153:23 180:8,24 191:16,18 192:5
191:10,18 192:3 197:3,4 199:13 211:6 227:2 230:7
233:14,24 234:7,9 246:9 255:19,20
258:2
yellow 187:14 188:4,15 202:21
202:23,25 206:11 215:24 241:2,4
yesterday 24:22 youd 56:24 143:2
143:17 166:13
179:22 232:6
<b>youll</b> 7:3 98:18 165:5 205:15
212:24
youre 7:7 10:24
16:20 19:22 29:1 36:1 47:13 54:23
57:23 58:21 66:7
66:10,11 68:12
70:14 76:17 77:12 80:15 81:14 85:1
89:11 96:9 98:6
99:23 104:20
105:1 108:6
112:11,13 135:10 136:20 150:13
151:10 152:14
154:21 159:9,21
163:7 166:7 170:24 171:1
179:3,4 182:11
187:17 191:18
201:25 202:8 203:9,10 214:13
218:11 221:10
229:9 233:16
238:21 239:11 244:3 254:19,21
255:9 256:17
259:15,16 263:1
271:18 youve 10:13 11:17
J

# Zurn 134:10 198:3 246:10 256:10,17

## 0 0 223:6 253:2 00 6:6 000 220:12,13 01 274:24,25 06 45:8 08 132:2

# **1** 4:13 5:9 44:19,19 46:1,5 47:21 48:2 68:18 131:22 132:22 134:21,21 135:13 136:13,13 137:1 139:25 189:12 223:6 229:10 253:2,2,4 253:4,6,8 256:12 **10** 199:21 **100** 38:18 127:13 131:23 132:4,13 134:13,16 135:11 135:18 136:7 147:4 199:3 204:21 242:24 255:10 259:9,10 270:15 **1006** 44:15 47:1 54:25 82:6 86:21 87:3,5,11 134:5,8 134:22 135:15 136:8 139:25

140:15 142:18

146:23 194:6,13

250:18,22 251:1
<b>100873</b> 205:23
<b>105</b> 255:11
<b>107</b> 4:16
<b>11</b> 123:7 161:6,16
251:12
<b>1105</b> 65:5
<b>112090</b> 256:25
<b>116072</b> 222:2
<b>117408</b> 199:22
<b>117793</b> 222:21
<b>12</b> 68:17 113:7
161:7,16 255:23
263:3
<b>120</b> 148:23 224:23
<b>122</b> 171:8
<b>123109</b> 167:16
<b>123113</b> 167:16
<b>123118</b> 171:8
<b>125460</b> 263:1
<b>13</b> 43:1 74:7
<b>130</b> 4:17
<b>130903</b> 216:12
<b>131364</b> 221:3
<b>131367</b> 221:3
<b>132068</b> 207:16
<b>132070</b> 207:16
<b>133458</b> 218:10
<b>134644</b> 229:8
<b>134645</b> 234:12
<b>134646</b> 233:12,19
<b>134648</b> 229:8
<b>134691</b> 244:2
<b>134695</b> 244:22
<b>134697</b> 244:2
<b>135068</b> 249:21
<b>135070</b> 249:21
<b>135088</b> 265:13
<b>135089</b> 265:13
<b>135196</b> 224:21
<b>136</b> 4:18
<b>137871</b> 1:2
<b>14</b> 75:22
<b>15</b> 88:25 102:14,15
203:6 267:7
<b>150</b> 4:19 148:23,24

<b>153</b> 4:20
155 4:20 15cv1124 1:14
<b>16</b> 197:5 238:20
<b>1622</b> 2:20
<b>163</b> 4:21
<b>165</b> 149:9
<b>166</b> 4:4
<b>167</b> 4:24
<b>17</b> 236:23,25
<b>171</b> 4:25 137:18
<b>18</b> 1:24 5:10 113:7
179:24 239:18,19
239:25 241:11
242:22
<b>180</b> 160:4 204:14
204:21 255:9
<b>1807</b> 197:23
<b>185</b> 255:10
<b>19</b> 11:22 201:5,8
274:24
<b>19103</b> 2:21
<b>197</b> 5:3
<b>1976</b> 12:11
<b>1979</b> 12:22,23 13:5
13:16
<b>1983</b> 13:17
<b>1988</b> 11:23,24
<b>199</b> 5:4
<b>1990</b> 14:17,24
<b>1990s</b> 99:7
<b>1991</b> 17:2
<b>1994</b> 15:3,11
<b>1996</b> 15:20
<b>1999</b> 15:9,25
<b>19th</b> 6:5
<b>1rated</b> 135:5,22
2
<b>2</b> 4:14 59:14,18,21
68:18 74:5,7
88:12 131:6
133:14 137:24
164:20

**20** 20:15 72:2 99:8

112:6 184:20

197:7 213:4

<b>200</b> 148:17
<b>2000</b> 17:3 29:7
242:5
<b>2000s</b> 187:3
<b>2001</b> 16:6,11 17:3,4
17:5
<b>2002</b> 17:9,12
<b>2004</b> 17:10,25
25:25 29:7,11,13
31:7 35:11,17
<b>2005</b> 40:25 64:21 65:4,16
<b>2006</b> 17:4,5 19:2,2
28:22,25 29:2,4,9
29:14 30:21 33:2
36:19 37:16 38:6
38:21 39:5 42:1
72:23 74:21
120:12 145:4,8,8
145:20 162:17,20
190:9 258:2,11
<b>2007</b> 161:12 162:9
<b>2008</b> 4:18 5:8 19:18
19:22 22:5 85:18
107:22 109:1,5
113:14 114:19
115:5 137:1
139:25 145:24
161:9,15 163:11
180:9 190:11,21 197:12 198:23
197:12 198:23 226:20
<b>2009</b> 4:15,24 60:1
61:19 80:8,13
81:2 125:2 167:24
169:4 190:11
<b>2010</b> 4:13 48:3,11
52:22,25 136:3,5
161:6,16 199:21
248:7
<b>2011</b> 5:5,6,9,10
149:16 187:13,24
188:16 201:8
202:14 203:11
224:13,13 229:10
232:6 233:22



Page 4	42
--------	----

		 I	ı	1
234:8,14 235:17	<b>2345</b> 3:6	<b>32750</b> 260:25	<b>500</b> 2:10 214:3	7
237:12 239:18,19	<b>239</b> 5:10	<b>33</b> 259:14	220:1	7 4:3,20 5:5 63:24
239:25 241:11	<b>24</b> 5:13 136:19	<b>3308</b> 45:19 86:14	<b>5006</b> 252:5 256:11	153:14 201:8
242:22 244:5	256:25	86:20 87:1,10,11	<b>50year</b> 60:19 138:8	218:11 267:7
<b>2012</b> 4:17,25 5:7,13	<b>244</b> 5:11	147:4 194:7,9,15	139:1	273:14
20:15 21:6 43:1	<b>25</b> 46:5 127:4,6	<b>3308graded</b> 131:11	<b>51</b> 207:14,17,21	<b>73</b> 222:3
109:16 110:2,10	134:14 135:1,13	<b>350</b> 220:12,13	<b>52</b> 211:23 212:3	<b>75</b> 62:13 247:9
110:14 112:6,21	135:23 136:17	<b>360</b> 204:14	213:1	<b>7501592</b> 2:12
121:9,24 129:13	140:6,19 151:21		<b>53</b> 216:11,16	
129:15 130:2	153:20,23 188:2	4	<b>5306</b> 261:12,25	8
131:4 136:3,5	197:7 233:22	<b>4</b> 4:17 68:18 74:7	<b>54</b> 218:9,14	<b>8</b> 4:21 68:2 162:9
149:16 155:11	261:2 273:14	130:15 139:18	<b>55</b> 220:23,25	163:23 224:13
164:20 165:8	<b>250</b> 5:12	140:24 237:12	<b>56</b> 222:2,5	<b>80</b> 146:18 147:6,7
171:10,13,18	<b>256</b> 5:13	<b>40</b> 39:24 211:5	<b>57</b> 222:17,17,18,20	147:21 148:2
187:13,24 190:13	<b>26</b> 234:14	<b>40209</b> 6:5	228:7	161:24 177:12
190:14 205:22	<b>261</b> 5:14	<b>40s</b> 139:12	<b>5705</b> 205:25	181:10,10
206:10 213:4	<b>263</b> 5:15	<b>411</b> 199:22	<b>58</b> 5:8 224:21 225:1	800 94:22
250:23 251:14	<b>264</b> 5:16	<b>44</b> 4:24 167:9,13	<b>59</b> 4:14 5:9 229:7	<b>816</b> 3:8,9
252:3 256:25	<b>265</b> 5:18	170:15 173:10	229:13 232:12	<b>82</b> 126:20 127:8
258:1	<b>267</b> 4:5	<b>45</b> 4:25 171:7,15	234:23 235:16	<b>83</b> 13:18,19,20
<b>2013</b> 29:25 30:6	<b>27</b> 5:6 203:11	<b>46</b> 5:3 197:9,14,21		<b>83111</b> 223:15
43:2,10 86:16,17	235:17	<b>4605714</b> 3:8	6	<b>85</b> 127:13,14
112:7,21 114:19	<b>270</b> 4:6	<b>464</b> 218:10	<b>6</b> 4:19 5:7 150:2	<b>850</b> 204:24
116:25 187:24	<b>272</b> 4:7	<b>46830</b> 213:2	205:22 267:8	<b>86</b> 13:19
216:14 218:11	<b>2734</b> 6:4	<b>46831</b> 213:2	272:18	<b>87</b> 13:20
221:4 261:2 263:3	<b>28</b> 4:14 60:1 216:13	<b>47</b> 4:13 5:4 199:20	<b>60</b> 5:10 239:17,22	<b>874</b> 205:23
<b>2014</b> 20:1 22:6	<b>29</b> 221:4	199:23	242:21	<b>8753000</b> 2:22
23:25 24:1 30:21	<b>2922001</b> 3:9	<b>48</b> 5:5 203:7	<b>600</b> 220:1	<b>8754604</b> 2:23
242:6		<b>49</b> 5:6 204:10	<b>60606</b> 2:11	<b>876</b> 138:3 197:24
<b>2015</b> 224:23 265:24	3	5	<b>61</b> 5:11 244:1,9	198:1,1,8,8
<b>2017</b> 1:24 6:6	3 1:14 4:16 46:1		<b>62</b> 5:12 249:19,25	<b>88</b> 126:20,20 127:8
274:25	60:8,14 63:25	<b>5</b> 4:18 63:25 75:23	<b>62269</b> 264:19	
<b>2020</b> 274:24	74:7 107:14,16	131:23 132:4,11	<b>62271</b> 264:19	9
<b>2023</b> 104:15 137:18	131:23,24 135:13	132:15 133:23	<b>63</b> 5:13 256:20,21	<b>9</b> 6:6 64:23
138:9 139:14	136:13,13 253:6	134:1 135:10,12	256:24	<b>90</b> 31:5 127:14
203 5:5	256:12 262:7,10	136:13,14,22	<b>6301</b> 239:18	260:2
<b>204</b> 5:6	<b>30</b> 72:2 123:7	251:14 252:3	<b>6302</b> 239:18	<b>900</b> 204:24 246:19
<b>21</b> 259:16	274:25	253:2,8 259:17	<b>64</b> 5:14 260:24	247:2,10
<b>2103</b> 259:16	<b>31</b> 48:3 224:13	260:2 261:20	261:4	9000 242:12
<b>211</b> 2:10	<b>312</b> 2:12	262:6,9,12	<b>641082618</b> 3:7	<b>9001</b> 241:12,19
<b>215</b> 2:22,23	<b>31944</b> 197:11	<b>50</b> 5:7 22:19 62:13	<b>65</b> 5:15 262:25	96 15:22
<b>22</b> 107:22 244:4	<b>31945</b> 197:11	131:23 135:6,12	263:5 264:3	<b>99</b> 15:22
<b>2200</b> 3:6	31st 50:22	138:21 205:14,17	<b>66</b> 5:16 264:18,24	
<b>225</b> 5:8	<b>32042</b> 252:8,16	205:18,21 211:5	<b>67</b> 5:18 265:12,15	
<b>229</b> 5:9	<b>32043</b> 252:8,23	222:16 247:8	266:10	
<b>23</b> 5:8 197:11	<b>32749</b> 260:25	255:19,20		
	I	I	l .	I

